

Promotional Assessment Study Guide

**Customs and Border Protection Officer /
Agricultural Specialist**



U.S. Customs and
Border Protection



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OVERVIEW

This guide is designed to provide you with readily accessible, consolidated information to prepare for the promotional assessments. The materials and activities in this guide are aligned with the competencies assessed in the promotional process.

This version of the guide has been updated as a result of candidate feedback. It is different from previous versions in several ways:

- Suggestions are provided to assist you in developing a study plan;
- General test-taking strategies are provided;
- All study resources are consolidated into one document for ease of access; and,
- Resources are updated to reflect interactive, web-based content.

The guide includes descriptions of the assessment components, testing environment, and suggested preparation strategies. While the strategies are provided to assist in your preparation efforts, they do not guarantee a passing score. You are encouraged to review this guide carefully, and to take advantage of opportunities to prepare – your level of effort is the key to success.

Why was this guide created?

Customs and Border Protection (CBP) wants you to be successful in the promotional process, and in your new position upon promotion. This study guide is designed to help you prepare for the promotional assessments. Most importantly, it allows you to take an active role in your career development. You can benefit by enhancing your readiness for progression to a supervisory position. CBP benefits from a workforce where candidates are prepared to succeed upon promotion.

Who should use this guide?

You should use this guide if you aspire to supervisory or management positions in the Customs and Border Protection Officer and Agricultural Specialist career ladders.

If you have not yet participated in the promotional assessments, you should identify your strengths and weaknesses related to the competencies measured. A list of core competencies measured in the promotional assessment process begins on [page 5](#). Next, use this guide to design and implement a study plan.

If you have already participated in the promotional assessments, use this guide in combination with your individual feedback report to create a study plan targeted toward your developmental needs. Your feedback report is designed to provide value by prescribing areas of developmental need. Newly promoted supervisors may also find the resources in this guide of value during the transition to, or early days in, a management role.

PROMOTIONAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS OVERVIEW

Development

The promotional assessments are designed to predict how well you will perform as a supervisory or managerial Customs and Border Protection Officer (CBPO) or Agricultural Specialist. To achieve this, CBP develops the assessments in collaboration with supervisory and managerial CBPOs and Agricultural Specialists, which begins with a process called job analysis.

The job analysis process results in a detailed understanding of the duties and competencies required to perform effectively in supervisory and managerial roles. Next, assessment content is developed to measure competencies in job-related ways.

The Supervisory/Managerial Competency Model

The CBP Supervisory/Managerial Competency Model provides detailed information about the competencies needed in supervisory and managerial positions. Reviewing and evaluating how these competencies are applied on the job is integral to the job analysis process. Similarly, an understanding of these competencies will help you understand how to prepare for promotion, and aid you in appraising your current strengths and weaknesses. For more information on CBP's Competency Models, visit <http://cbpnet.cbp.dhs.gov> and search for 'competency model.'

The Supervisory/Managerial Competency Model appears below:



Competencies Assessed

The competency model provides a comprehensive picture of the skills required in supervisory and managerial positions; however, not all are assessed in the promotional process. Instead, a subset of competencies is measured. This subset is comprised of competencies identified as most important in the job analysis, and competencies that can be evaluated reliably. The assessment components, and core competencies measured in each, are listed below:

<i>Assessment</i>	<i>Competencies Measured</i>
Career Experience Inventory	<p>Leading Others - Inspires, motivates, and guides others toward goal accomplishment.</p> <p>Teaching Others - Identifies training needs; provides constructive reinforcement; coaches others on how to perform tasks; acts as a source of information.</p> <p>Performance & Results Management - Takes steps to achieve quality end products; is committed to continuous improvement; assures that effective controls are in place; holds self and others accountable for meeting expectations; monitors and evaluates plans; focuses on results and on measuring attainment of outcomes.</p> <p>Planning & Resource Management - Develops short and long-range plans that are realistic and appropriately comprehensive; includes contingency plans, as appropriate; determines material and human resource requirements and ensures that needed resources are available; coordinates with other parts of the organization to accomplish goals.</p> <p>Knowing the Job - Has mastery of the technical knowledge required to perform the job and the jobs of those supervised; knows where to find key information that does not need to be memorized; understands near-term and long-range plans and determines how best to run the program to achieve organizational goals.</p> <p>Oral Communication - Makes clear and convincing oral presentations to individuals or groups; listens effectively and clarifies information as needed; facilitates an open exchange of ideas and fosters an atmosphere of open communication.</p> <p>Written Communication - Expresses facts and ideas in writing in a clear, convincing, and organized manner.</p>
Critical Thinking Skills Exercise	<p>Decision-making - Makes sound decisions based on available information; perceives the impact and implications of decisions; able to commit to action in uncertain situations to accomplish organizational goals.</p> <p>Problem Solving - Identifies and analyzes problems; distinguishes between relevant and irrelevant information; provides options for resolving problems.</p> <p>Reasoning - Draws valid conclusions from available information; identifies rules and relationships when evaluating facts and other information.</p>
Managerial Writing Skills	<p>Written Communication - Expresses facts and ideas in writing in a clear, convincing, and organized manner.</p>

<i>Assessment</i>	<i>Competencies Measured</i>
In-Basket Simulation	<p>Decision-making - Makes sound decisions based on available information; perceives the impact and implications of decisions; able to commit to action in uncertain situations to accomplish organizational goals.</p> <p>Problem Solving - Identifies and analyzes problems; distinguishes between relevant and irrelevant information; provides options for resolving problems.</p> <p>Managing & Organizing Information - Identifies need for information; gathers, organizes, and maintains information; and determines its importance and accuracy, and disseminates it by a variety of methods.</p> <p>Self-management - Shows initiative; sets well-defined and realistic personal goals; monitors progress and is motivated to achieve; manages own time and deals with stress effectively.</p> <p>Performance & Results Management - Takes steps to achieve quality end products; is committed to continuous improvement; assures that effective controls are in place; holds self and others accountable for meeting expectations; monitors and evaluates plans; focuses on results and on measuring attainment of outcomes.</p> <p>Planning & Resource Management - Develops short and long-range plans that are realistic and appropriately comprehensive; includes contingency plans, as appropriate; determines material and human resource requirements and ensures that needed resources are available; coordinates with other parts of the organization to accomplish goals.</p>

Testing Logistics

The promotional assessments are administered through a computer-based system at testing centers throughout the country. To participate in the assessments, you must apply to the promotional assessment announcement during the advertised open period. If you are eligible to take the assessments, you will receive an email with instructions for accessing the computerized testing website to schedule your test appointment.

You must follow the instructions to schedule your appointment during the published scheduling period. When you have successfully scheduled your appointment time, you will receive a confirmation email with the date, location, and reporting details for their appointment. You should print out this email confirmation and bring a copy to the test center.

Each test center is equipped with multiple computer work stations and offers a relatively distraction-free environment, similar to working in an office or computer lab environment. Ear plugs, headphones or noise-cancelling devices are available upon request. When you arrive at the test center, you will be signed in by a proctor and assigned to a computer for your testing session. For ease of check-in, refer to your appointment confirmation email and abide by the instructions. Once seated, you will follow the directions in the appointment confirmation email to log onto the testing website.

Prior to completing your assessments, you will be presented with a practice test. The practice test is designed to orient you to the functions available in the assessment system. Be sure to carefully read and understand the information presented. The screen shot below displays information about how the system functions.

The screenshot shows the 'pan Sample Assessment Section 1' interface. At the top left is the 'pan' logo with 'A TALK Company' underneath. To the right of the logo, it says 'Section 1'. In the top right corner, there is a 'Timer: 0:19:49' and a 'Total Test Questions = 30' indicator with a progress bar. The main content area displays a question: '1) What is the capital of the United States?' with four multiple-choice options: 'A) Texas', 'B) Washington, D.C.', 'C) Baltimore', and 'D) Los Angeles'. To the left of the question is a checkbox. Below the question, there are two buttons: 'Previous Page' and 'Next Page'. Several callout boxes provide instructions: one points to the checkbox saying 'This checkbox is used to "Mark" items for Review. If you would like to return to an item prior to finishing your assessment, check this box.'; another points to the timer saying 'The timer clock shows how much time you have remaining to complete the assessment. If the timer expires before you complete the assessment, your answers will be saved automatically.'; a third points to the progress bar saying 'The Progress bar illustrates how much of the assessment you have completed.'; a fourth points to the 'Previous Page' button saying 'Clicking the Previous Page button returns you to the previous screen. It saves any updates to the page prior to leaving.'; and a fifth points to the 'Next Page' button saying 'Clicking the Next Page button advances you to the next screen. It saves any updates to the page prior to leaving.'

The time you spend completing the practice test is not counted against the time allotted for the actual assessments. After you complete the practice test, you will be presented with on-screen instructions to complete your assessments.

All assessment items are presented in multiple-choice format. You will be instructed to select the one, best answer from the choices. The format of the items varies based on the type of assessment you are

completing. For example, some items may require you to review a passage or set of principles, while other items may require you to evaluate simulated emails and to select the best action.

During the assessment, you will have the ability to mark items for later review. This feature will allow you to move on to the next question when you are unsure of your answer. Provided there is time remaining, you will be able to return to all of the questions you have marked for review. You can use this feature to review and change your answers prior to submitting. The screen shot below displays how items marked for review will appear.

Practice Test

Timer: 0:01:18

Progress

Please review and/or answer these items. You can answer the item(s) or change your response(s) from this page.

Marked for review

1) What is the capital of the United States?

☐ A) Houston

☒ B) Washington, D.C.

☐ C) Baltimore

☐ D) Los Angeles

Marked for review

2) Independence Day is celebrated in the United States on which date?

☒ A) July 4th

☐ B) December 25th

☐ C) August 10th

☐ D) April 2nd

Marked for review

3) The United States of America has how many states?

☐ A) 1

☐ B) 13

☐ C) 50

☒ D) 160

Previous Page

Next Page

The maximum time allotted for each assessment component is standardized. A timer will be visible on your computer screen during the assessment. The timer will automatically count down as time passes, and stop when the maximum time limit has been reached. When the timer stops, you will no longer be able to work on the assessment. If you complete one or more of the assessments prior to the maximum time allotted, you may choose to proceed to the next assessment without waiting for the timer to expire.

It is important to note that delays in loading pages do not count against the total time you are allotted.

The maximum times for each of the assessment components appear below.

Assessment Component	Maximum time
Check-in & Instructions	20 minutes
Critical Thinking Skills	40 minutes
Break	10 minutes
Managerial Writing Skills	50 minutes
Break	10 minutes
In-Basket – Review Materials	40 minutes
In-Basket – Answer Questions	50 minutes
Check-out	20 minutes
TOTAL	240 minutes

DEVELOP A STUDY PLAN

To improve your chances of performing well on the assessments, develop a targeted study plan with action steps and due dates. Use the steps below to outline your plan. A planning checklist and example action plan are included to illustrate this process.

Planning Checklist

- ☐ Read the ‘General Test Preparation Strategies’ section of this guide to learn about general test preparation strategies.
- ☐ Learn about the assessments by reading the assessment descriptions in this guide.
- ☐ Self-Appraisal: Identify your strengths and weaknesses related to the competencies measured in the assessments.
 - *If you have taken the assessments in the past, review your most recent feedback report, then return to this checklist. Recommendations to assist you in translating your feedback report into a study plan appear on the next page.*
- ☐ Prioritize the competencies you will develop through your studies based on your self-appraisal or feedback report.
- ☐ Review the resources and activities related to the competencies you have prioritized.
 - Select activities and resources that appeal to your learning style.
 - Choose activities that are achievable within the amount of time you will devote to assessment preparation.
- ☐ Make a note of the activities and resources you will engage in using the Study Plan form at the end of this section.
 - Break the activities into achievable tasks.
- ☐ Set realistic timelines and milestones for completing each activity.
- ☐ Consider incorporating activities into your Individual Development Plan (IDP) or mentoring goals.

Review Your Feedback Report

1. Obtain your most recent Feedback Report.
 - Navigate to <https://secure.vitapowered.com/cbp/login.screen>.
 - Login to the automated testing system.
 - Click on the button labeled **Results** to access your score report.
 - Click on the ‘**Please click here to view your Score Report for Previous and/or Current testing**’ link to view your score report.
 - Click on the ‘**Click here for an explanation of your scores**’ link button to download the **Feedback Guide**.
2. Print a copy of your score report and the feedback guide.
3. Identify the position(s) you wish to obtain.
4. Review the Feedback Guide to understand how scores are calculated. Make a note of the assessment weights that contribute to the total score for the position(s) you wish to obtain. These weights are summarized in the table below:

First-Line GS-13 positions:	All Others:
Career Experience Inventory 30%	Career Experience Inventory 30%
Critical Thinking Skills Assessment 40%	Critical Thinking Skills Assessment 30%
Managerial Writing Skills Exercise 30%	Managerial Writing Skills Exercise 20%
	In-Basket Job Simulation 20%

5. Identify areas labeled as developmental needs. These are areas where you earned less than 66% of the possible points.
6. Prioritize the developmental needs you wish to include in your study plan:
 - Consider developmental needs that contribute to assessment components with higher weights (e.g., 40%, 30%) , as these contribute more to your total scores; and,
 - Consider developmental needs with a low percentage of correct responses.

The next two pages provide examples of how to review a feedback report and develop a study plan using the steps described. For this example, the candidate is interested in obtaining the GS-13 1st Line Supervisor job. There is also space to develop your own study plan.

Example Feedback Report

Effective Date, CBP Officer Report	5/31/2016
GS-13 1st-Line Supervisory CBP Officer:	
Total Score (a score of 70 or above is passing):	75
Your total score was greater than or equal to this percentage of the other candidates of your grade level who were assessed:	40
GS-13, GS-14 2nd-Line Supervisory CBP Officer, 2nd-Line Supervisory CBP Officer (CDI):	
Total Score (a score of 70 or above is passing):	74
Your total score was greater than or equal to this percentage of the other candidates of your grade level who were assessed:	31
CBP Officer (Program Manager), CBP Officer (Field Canine Advisor):	
Total Score (a score of 70 or above is passing):	74
Your total score was greater than or equal to this percentage of the other candidates of your grade level who were assessed:	30
GS-13, GS-14 Port Director (incl. Assistant, Deputy, and Area PD), Assistant Director, Field Operations:	
Total Score (a score of 70 or above is passing):	73
Your total score was greater than or equal to this percentage of the other candidates of your grade level who were assessed:	30
CBP Officer Career Experience Inventory (CEI): 30%	
CEI Effective Date:	
Experience Score (out of 100): GS-13 1st-Line Supervisory CBP Officer:	58
Experience Score (out of 100): GS-13, GS-14 2nd-Line Supervisory CBP Officer, 2nd-Line Supervisory CBPO (CDI):	54
Experience Score (out of 100): CBP Officer (Program Manager), CBP Officer (Field Canine Advisor):	48
Experience Score (out of 100): GS-13, GS-14 Port Director, Asst. PD, Deputy PD, Area PD, Assistant Dir Field Operations:	52
CBPO/AG Critical Thinking Skills Assessment: 40%	
Total Score:	24
Score Possible:	41
Percentile:	28
Competency % Correct:	58
Developmental Need?:	Yes
Sub-Competency % Linking Statements:	40
Developmental Need?:	Yes
Sub-Competency % Linking Groups (Sets):	60
Developmental Need?:	Yes
Sub-Competency % Reasoning with Negatives:	70
Developmental Need?:	No
Sub-Competency % Avoiding Illogical Processing of Information:	63
Developmental Need?:	Yes
CBPO/AG Managerial Writing Skills Exercise: 30%	
Total Score:	23
Score Possible:	29
Percentile:	42
Competency % Correct:	79
Developmental Need?:	No
Sub-Competency % Sentence Construction:	80
Developmental Need?:	No
Sub-Competency % Paragraph Construction and Organization:	79
Developmental Need?:	No
CBPO/AG In-Basket Job Simulation:	
Total Score:	51
Score Possible:	94
Percentile:	31
Competency % Correct:	54
Developmental Need?:	Yes

Although all scores are visible, this candidate focuses on scores for the GS13 1st line supervisor job. This is the job the candidate wants to obtain. 60% of candidates received higher scores than this candidate.

This candidate writes in the weights that each assessment contributes to the total score for 1st line GS13 job.

Looking at the weights, the candidate understands that Critical Thinking Skills is weighted more than the other assessments for the desired job.

This candidate has several developmental needs related to Critical Thinking. Based on this, the candidate might decide to focus on developing Critical Thinking Skills.

Since the In-Basket does not contribute to total scores for 1st line GS13 positions, this candidate might decide not to focus on this developmental need.

Example Study Plan

Competency	Developmental Activity	Frequency	Milestones	Start Date	End Date
<i>Critical Thinking Skills</i>	<i>Participate in a study group to work through the Manual of Job-Related Thinking Skills</i>	<i>bi-weekly</i>	<i>Set up a study group Take Pre-test Read & Review Unit II Read & Review Unit III Read & Review Unit IV Complete Post-test in Manual</i>	<i>Sept, 2016 Sept, 2016 Oct, 2016 Nov, 2016 Dec, 2016 Jan, 2017</i>	<i>Oct, 2016 Oct, 2016 Nov, 2016 Dec, 2016 Jan, 2017 Feb, 2017</i>
<i>Critical Thinking Skills</i>	<i>Complete an additional online, Critical Thinking Skills test to measure progress after each unit</i>	<i>Oct, 2016 Nov, 2016 Dec, 2016</i>	<i>Score on test #1: Score on test #2: Score on test #3:</i>	<i>Nov, 2016 Dec, 2016 Jan, 2017</i>	<i>Nov, 2016 Dec, 2016 Jan, 2017</i>

Your Study Plan

Competency	Developmental Activity	Frequency	Milestones	Start Date	End Date

GENERAL TEST PREPARATION STRATEGIES

Assess Your Learning Style

Research suggests different ways of learning appeal to different individuals. To maximize your study time, it may be helpful to explore your learning style and design a study plan to match your preferences. There are several learning style questionnaires available on the internet. The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency provides a series of brief assessments for public use:

<http://www.educationplanner.org/students/self-assessments/index.shtml>.

You can locate additional learning style inventories by searching the internet for key words such as ‘learning styles’ and ‘study strategies.’

Assess Your Pace

To perform well on the assessments, you will need to work at a pace that permits you to answer the maximum number of questions while responding to questions carefully. A pace that allows you to respond to approximately one question per minute is advantageous. To practice pacing yourself, include one or more timed practice tests in your study plan.

Minimize Test Anxiety

Test anxiety can cause candidates to perform poorly on assessments. You can attempt to reduce the effects of test anxiety through the strategies listed below:

Several weeks/months in advance

- ☐ Develop a study plan and space out your studying over a few weeks or months
- ☐ Exercise to reduce stress
- ☐ Schedule your test session
- ☐ Print your appointment confirmation email
- ☐ Plan your work and personal commitments to avoid conflicts with your assessment appointment
- ☐ Notify your supervisor of your scheduled appointment date & time

The week of the assessment

- ☐ Gather and review your test confirmation email
- ☐ Purchase energy bars, bottled water, or other portable foods to have for breaks during the test
- ☐ Ensure that you arrive on time by mapping the test center and planning your travel route

The day before the assessment

- ☐ Refrain from ‘cramming’
- ☐ Get plenty of rest the day before the test session

On assessment day

- ☐ Exercise before the test to reduce stress
- ☐ Click the link in your appointment confirmation email to check for last minute test center closures
- ☐ Arrive at the test center early
- ☐ Avoid going to the test center on an empty stomach
- ☐ Approach the test with confidence
- ☐ Breathe deeply to relax
- ☐ Relieve muscle tension by periodically stretching or making a fist and releasing it
- ☐ Read the directions slowly and carefully

Strategies for Multiple-Choice Questions

- ✓ Try to answer each question correctly before you look at the response options.
- ✓ Do not over-analyze the questions. Determine the best response using only the information supplied in the question, without making unwarranted assumptions. The correct answer is the one that works best for the situation described.
- ✓ Be sure to choose an answer that is directly related to the question being asked. Do not select an answer choice, even if it is a true or correct statement by itself, unless it specifically answers the question being asked.
- ✓ The correct response includes the *most* exact or *most* complete information in response to the question. Other response options may be partially correct or less complete than the correct response.
- ✓ If you believe you know the answer, compare it to the available choices and pick the choice closest in meaning to the answer you have in mind.
- ✓ Avoid wasting time on difficult questions. Select a response and flag these questions so that you may return to them later. When you spend too much time on tough questions, you may lose the opportunity to answer easier questions that appear later.
- ✓ Set aside 5 minutes at the end of the assessment time to return to questions you have flagged and select an answer.
- ✓ Use the process of elimination to make educated guesses when you do not know the answer. Evaluate each response option to eliminate any answers that are clearly wrong. Then determine how you feel about the remaining choices. The probability of choosing a correct answer increases when you can eliminate options.
- ✓ Mark a response for every question – even if you guess on one or more questions, you will get credit for any correct answers.
- ✓ If you finish the test before the time period is over, review your answers and make any changes that are necessary.
- ✓ Do not change your original answer unless you are *absolutely sure* that your original answer is wrong.
- ✓ Ignore any patterns of A's, B's, or C's in your responses. These patterns have no relationship to the correct answers.

CAREER EXPERIENCE INVENTORY (CEI)

Assessment Overview

This assessment is a questionnaire that assesses the quantity and quality of specific experiences important for effective performance as a supervisor or manager in CBP Officer or Agriculture Specialist positions. The questions are administered as part of your USAJOBS application to the promotional assessment announcement. Questions cover job experiences related to technical skills as well as the competencies listed in the Competencies Assessed [section](#) of this guide.

You will select the responses that best describe your current level of experience, and write narratives to support your selection when prompted. Your responses are scored based on predetermined point values devised by supervisors and managers in your career ladder. The narratives you write are not scored; however, they are collected to substantiate the experience levels you select.

CEI Strategies

This section provides suggestions about how to complete the CEI.

Before completing your CEI for the first time:

- ✓ Gather information about your professional accomplishments related to the competencies assessed.
- ✓ Make a list of projects, collateral duties, details, or acting assignments wherein you applied the supervisory competencies measured to make completion of the questionnaire easier.

Once you have completed your CEI:

- ✓ Your responses to CEI questions are retained in your Application Manager account.
- ✓ You may view the CEI questions and your answers at any time by logging in to your USAJOBS account, and clicking on ‘more information’ next to the promotional assessment announcement in which you submitted your CEI.
- ✓ You should print out and retain the CEI questions and your responses.

Improving your CEI score:

- ✓ Review the CEI questions to identify areas where you need to gain more experience – this will help you to increase your score when you submit a new CEI.
- ✓ To see how your overall CEI results compare to others in the same grade level, visit the CEI Dashboard:
https://app.cbpnet.cbp.dhs.gov/sites/CEI/_layouts/15/cei_dashboard/emprep.aspx.
- ✓ The information presented in this Dashboard is also available to selecting officials.

Whenever you submit a new CEI, it replaces your old one entirely - the points for the experience levels you select are added up again to calculate your new CEI score. If, overall, you happen to select responses of lesser value on your new submission, then your new CEI score will be lower.

Print, retain, and review a copy of your CEI to avoid accidentally decreasing your score on subsequent submissions.

CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

Assessment Overview

This assessment measures your ability to apply critical thinking to real-world scenarios. This kind of thinking is required to plan and direct operations, deal with emergencies, handle personnel issues, and manage budgetary matters.

During the assessment, you will be asked to reach logical conclusions based on the facts given about workplace situations. Your conclusions should be based *only on the facts* provided. After you read each situation and the conclusions, you will indicate whether each conclusion is true, false, or whether you have insufficient information to draw a conclusion.

Selecting the ‘insufficient information’ response is not a sign that you are unable to make critical decisions, or to make decisions under fire. Instead, selecting the ‘insufficient information’ response indicates that more information must be gathered to know for sure if the conclusion is true or false. For example, you often have insufficient information to make a decision, so you must first speak with your superior, check a database, or contact Headquarters.

Critical Thinking Strategies

This section provides general suggestions for how to approach the Critical Thinking Skills Exercise.

- ✓ You are not being judged on job knowledge during this assessment. It is important to **accept every fact provided in the situation as true**.
- ✓ Work exclusively with the information provided. Do NOT use any outside facts to reach your conclusion.
- ✓ Examine the information presented carefully before reviewing the information. Use all of the available facts when drawing conclusions.
- ✓ You may find it helpful to draw diagrams to organize the information presented.

The following sections contain specific strategies for recognizing key words or that can help you decipher the relationships between facts presented. These strategies can be used to analyze the facts presented in questions to draw logical conclusions. If the concepts presented below are unfamiliar or difficult for you, refer to the critical thinking study resources listed on [page 30](#).

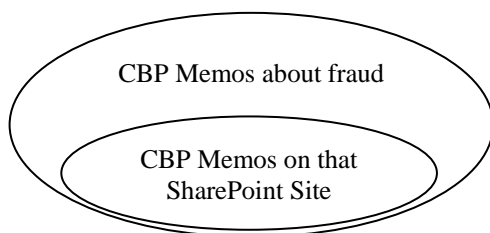
ALL AND EVERY

Statements that include the words ‘All’ or ‘Every’ indicate the total inclusion of one set or group of information within another.

Example: All of the CBP memos on that SharePoint site are about fraud.

When reading this statement, you can identify two sets of information the first is ‘CBP memos on that SharePoint site’ and the second is ‘CBP memos about fraud.’ The use of the word ‘All’ indicates that the group ‘CBP memos on that SharePoint site’ is entirely included in the ‘CBP memos about fraud’ group.

One possible representation of the relationship between the two sets of information is displayed graphically below. The diagrams show that all of the memos on the site are about fraud. You may find it helpful to use scrap paper to draw diagrams to keep track of the information presented during this assessment. You can use this information to quickly evaluate the conclusions related to each scenario.



Based on this ‘All’ statement, you can conclude that every CBP memo on that SharePoint site is about fraud. However, you cannot assume that all of the CBP Memos about fraud are on the SharePoint site. There is not enough information to conclude this. That *may* be the case, but as the graphic above shows, that may **not** be the case. You have no way of knowing whether there are other locations where CBP memos about fraud are stored. You can only determine that *some* of the CBP memos about fraud are on that SharePoint site, and that the CBP memos on the site are about fraud.

Example: All of the CBP memos on that SharePoint site are about fraud.

Conclusion:	All of the CBP memos about fraud are on that SharePoint site.		
	A) True	B) False	C) Insufficient Information
Conclusion:	Some of the CBP memos about fraud are on that SharePoint site.		
	A) True	B) False	C) Insufficient Information
Conclusion:	None of the CBP memos about fraud are on that SharePoint site.		
	A) True	B) False	C) Insufficient Information

IF-THEN

‘If-Then’ statements begin with ‘If’ and provide conditional information about a chain of information or events. The first statement begins with ‘If,’ and the next statement indicates what will occur. The first statement is the condition under which the second statement occurs.

Example: If I present my badge, then I am officially representing the Department

There is more than one way of wording the if-then relationship between statements. When a sentence starts with ‘If,’ ‘Whenever,’ ‘Each time,’ or ‘Every time’ it means that a conditional linkage is being described.

Examples: Whenever I present my badge, I am officially representing the Department.
Each time I present my badge, I am officially representing the Department.

If-then statements support reasoning forward and backward along the chain. Reasoning forward means that when the first statement occurs (presenting my badge), the later event(s) must follow (officially representing the Department). However, if we only know that the first event did not

occur, we have insufficient information to determine whether or not the latter event occurred.

The absence of the first event is **not** a sure sign that the latter event will **not** occur.

When reasoning backward, the absence of the later event (representing the Department) is a sure sign that the first event (presenting my badge) did not happen. However, the presence of the latter event is **not** a sure sign that the first event occurred; someone could officially represent the Department by wearing their uniform or using their credentials. If we only know that the latter event occurred, we have insufficient information to determine whether or not the first event occurred.

Example: Whenever I present my badge, I am officially representing the Department.

Conclusion If you present your badge, you are officially representing the Department.

A) **True** B) False C) Insufficient Information

Conclusion If you have not presented your badge, you are not officially representing the Department.

A) True B) False C) **Insufficient Information**

Conclusion If you are not officially representing the Department, you will not present your badge.

A) **True** B) False C) Insufficient Information

Conclusion If I am officially representing the Department, I have presented my badge.

A) True B) False C) **Insufficient Information**

QUANTIFIERS

Quantifiers refer to part of a larger group. Terms like ‘some,’ ‘most,’ ‘a few,’ and ‘almost all’ refer to a subset of a larger group. These words restrict the information to part of the group or set. This information is not sufficient to infer anything about the rest of the set.

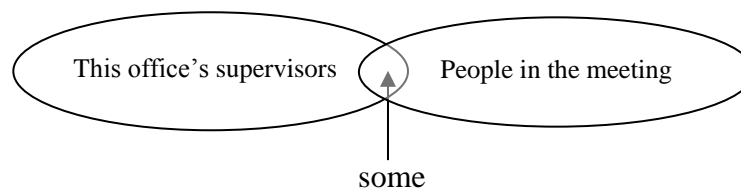
As we discussed in the [CBP memos example on page 17](#), when all the members of one group are also members of a second group, we know that *some* members of the second group must also be members of the first group. This is also true when a portion of the members of one group are also members of a second group; (at least) some members of the second group must also be members of the first group.

Quantifiers can be combined with negatives, as in ‘Many officers are **not** fluent in French.’

Remember, from this statement you may be tempted to infer that at least a few officers who *are* fluent in French, but there is insufficient information to support this conclusion. From this statement, you do not know about the entire set of officers and whether or not they are fluent in French.

Example: Some of this office’s supervisors are in the meeting.

When reading this statement, you can identify two groups, the first is ‘this office’s supervisors’ and the second is ‘people in the meeting.’ The use of the word ‘some’ indicates that at least some of this office’s supervisors are in the meeting. This information is displayed in the diagrams on the next page.



The diagrams show that the groups have some overlap, but the exact amount of overlap is not specified. The fact that we know that 'some of this office's supervisors' are in the meeting implies nothing about the remaining supervisors. From this, we cannot infer anything about the remaining supervisors.

Unless additional information is provided, you should treat 'Some' as meaning 'at least some.'

Using this information, you can also conclude that (at least) some of the people in the meeting are supervisors from this office.

Example: Some of this office's supervisors are in the meeting.

Conclusion: Some of the people in the meeting are supervisors from this office.

A) **True** B) False C) Insufficient Information

Conclusion: All of this office's supervisors are in the meeting.

A) True B) False C) **Insufficient Information**

You can make conclusions about the entire group from information about parts of the group when 'Only' or an exact percent, such as 70% is used. When these qualifiers are used, it provides information about both parts of the entire group.

The use of percentages describes all the parts of a group whether or not 'Only' is used. For example, the statement 'of all officers, 30% are fluent in French' describes the complete set of officers. From this statement, you can conclude both that 30% of the officers are fluent in French and that 70% of the officers are not fluent in French. From the statement, 'of all officers, *only* 30% are fluent in French,' you can still conclude that 30% of the officers are fluent in French and 70% are not.

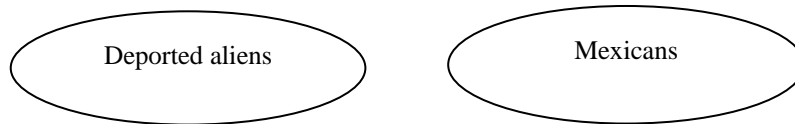
When you see a paragraph describing parts of a group, read the paragraph carefully to see if the description is based on knowledge of the entire group or only on part of the group.

NONE AND NOT

Pay close attention to statements that include the words 'None' and 'Not.' These words provide information that one set of information is not part of another set. You can use this negative information to draw conclusions about the relationships between the sets, since you know that the two sets have no members in common.

Example: None of those deported aliens were Mexican.

When reading this statement, you can identify two sets of information, the first is ‘deported aliens’ and the second is ‘Mexicans.’ The use of the word ‘None’ indicates that the ‘deported aliens’ does not include any ‘Mexicans.’ This information is displayed in the diagrams below:



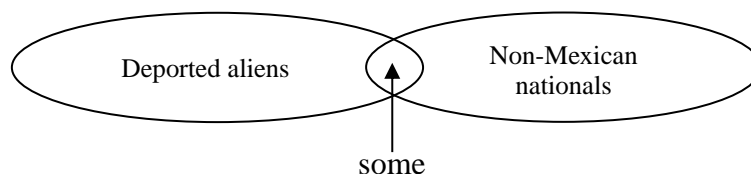
The diagrams show the sets have no overlap. Using this information, you also know that the statements ‘all of those deported aliens were Mexican’ and ‘some of those deported aliens were Mexican’ are false. This is important as many investigations hinge on disproved or negative facts.

Example: None of those deported aliens were Mexican.

Conclusion:	All of those deported aliens were Mexican.		
	A) True	B) False	C) Insufficient Information
Conclusion:	Some of those deported aliens were Mexican.		
	A) True	B) False	C) Insufficient Information

Quantifiers can also be combined with negatives. When quantifiers are combined with negatives, you do not know about the entire set of information. There is insufficient information to support conclusions about the entire set of information.

Example: Some of those deported aliens were not Mexican nationals.



The diagrams above shows the sets have some overlap. The fact that we know that ‘some of those deported aliens’ were not Mexican nationals implies nothing about the remaining aliens. Although you may be tempted to infer that at least a few deported aliens were Mexican, you cannot infer anything about the remaining aliens.

During the Critical Thinking Skills Exercise, read carefully for phrases or terms such as: ‘it is not the case that,’ ‘not all of the,’ and words that begin with the prefix ‘Non-.’

These phrases establish negative facts. Pay special attention to the entire statement. ‘It is not the case that those deported aliens are Mexican’ means ‘none of those deported aliens are Mexican.’ ‘It is not the case that *some* of those deported aliens are Mexican’ also means ‘none of those deported aliens are Mexican.’ However, ‘it is not the case that *all* of those deported aliens are Mexican’ only means ‘*some* of those deported aliens are not Mexican’ and provides insufficient information to determine whether or not the statement ‘none of those deported aliens are Mexican’ is true.

ILLOGICAL PROCESSING OF INFORMATION

To avoid unsupported assumptions, assume only as much as is definitely indicated by the facts given, and no more. Most people would not make a statement with negative information, like ‘Some of the pizza has no pepperoni,’ unless they are trying to suggest at the same time that some of the pizza **does** have pepperoni. However, during this assessment it is important to use language precisely. There is insufficient information to infer that the rest of the pizza has pepperoni.

In general, pay special attention to any words that provide information on categories or on linked events. This includes a wide range of negative words (e.g., seldom, never, illegal, or prohibited) and negative prefixes (e.g., non-, un-, or dis-). It also includes positive words (e.g., all, some, most, or always). You should also watch for connectors, (e.g., whenever, unless, or except) since these words sometimes contain key information about the relationships among the facts given in the paragraph.

English is a language that ordinarily uses single negatives. The word ‘not,’ by itself, does the job of making a formal English sentence into its opposite: the opposite of ‘That bird is an eagle’ is ‘That bird is not an eagle.’ However, when a sentence has two negatives, the negatives cancel each other out, giving the sentence a positive meaning. For example, a sentence that reads ‘This applicant is *not unworthy*’ means that the application *is* worthy.

Some of the questions in the Critical Thinking Skills Exercise require you to determine the probability that an event will occur. You can determine a probability when you have definite information about a group. For example, if you know that 60% of all first-line supervisors have taken the Leadership Development Center’s Basic Supervision course, then you can conclude that any particular supervisor has a 60% chance of having taken the course. You can also conclude that any particular supervisor has a 40% chance of **not** having taken the course. However, there is insufficient information about the entire set of people who have taken the course to determine either the probability that a person who has taken the course is a first-line supervisor or the probability that a person who has taken the course is not a first-line supervisor.

While studying, you may encounter blanket test preparation information advising you against choosing answers that start with the word ‘all’ or the word ‘none.’ Disregard this advice. ‘All’ and ‘None’ are valid quantifiers and you will need to work with them in this assessment.

Practice Questions

The following sample questions are similar to the types of items that you are likely to find on the assessment. Each situation describes a set of facts, and is followed by five conclusions. Choose a response option for each conclusion. The answers can be found on [page 27](#).

SITUATION 1

A van suspected of containing smuggled parrots crossed the border and traveled to the property of Mr. Vogel. The property, which was part personal residence and part commercial pet store, was completely fenced with barbed wire and had gates that allowed access to the property from two sides. There were several buildings in the compound, together with some permanent animal cages, but nothing other than the tops of the buildings was visible from the public roads. Officer Ramirez led a team of officers who entered the property from the two gates, which were closed at the time they made their entry. Two officers went directly to the van, but found that the parrots had been removed already. Almost simultaneously, the other officers found two small cages that were being installed within the large permanent animal cages. The officers immediately seized the parrots and arrested Mr. Vogel.

The court found that the entry into Mr. Vogel's property was legal and found that the seizure of the birds was admissible as the result of an extended border search. Searches are classifiable as extended border searches if and only if the searches are conducted immediately following continuous surveillance from the border to the point of search and are otherwise legally conducted. The entry was deemed legal because DHS officers are permitted to carry out both vehicle searches and entry into lands, enclosures, and buildings in the discharge of official duties.

1) If Officer Ramirez went directly to the empty van, then Officer Ramirez did not discover the two small cages being installed within the large permanent animal cages.

- A) **true**, the conclusion can be true given the facts
- B) **false**, the conclusion cannot be true given the facts
- C) **insufficient information**, there is insufficient information to determine the conclusion

2) The van was not under constant surveillance from the time it left the border until the time it entered the property of Mr. Vogel.

- A) **true**, the conclusion can be true given the facts
- B) **false**, the conclusion cannot be true given the facts
- C) **insufficient information**, there is insufficient information to determine the conclusion

3) If the officers who searched the van had found the parrots in it, the seizure of the birds could not have been classified as the result of an extended border search.

- A) **true**, the conclusion can be true given the facts
- B) **false**, the conclusion cannot be true given the facts
- C) **insufficient information**, there is insufficient information to determine the conclusion

4) It is not illegal for DHS officers to carry out vehicle searches in the discharge of official duties.

- A) **true**, the conclusion can be true given the facts
- B) **false**, the conclusion cannot be true given the facts
- C) **insufficient information**, there is insufficient information to determine the conclusion

5) All the permanent cages located within the enclosure of Mr. Vogel's property were invisible from the public roads.

A) **true**, the conclusion can be true given the facts

B) **false**, the conclusion cannot be true given the facts

C) **insufficient information**, there is insufficient information to determine the conclusion

SITUATION 2

During the second week of March, there was a marked increase in reported cases of suspect air traffic activity along the southwest border. The second week alone accounted for 75% of the entire reported total of 120 suspect flight cases that month. There was also a dramatic increase in the amount of contraband seized in the border region. In fact, for the preceding six months, whenever there had been an increase in reported suspect flight activity, there had also been an increase in contraband smuggling and an increase in seizures. However, during the first week of April, when over 50% of the month's 180 suspect flight cases occurred, there were only a few seizures of contraband materials reported.

6) For the preceding six months, whenever there has been a decrease in reported suspect flight activity, there has also been a decrease in contraband smuggling and in seizures.

A) **true**, the conclusion can be true given the facts

B) **false**, the conclusion cannot be true given the facts

C) **insufficient information**, there is insufficient information to determine the conclusion

7) In May, there will be more than 180 suspect flights cases across the southwest border region.

A) **true**, the conclusion can be true given the facts

B) **false**, the conclusion cannot be true given the facts

C) **insufficient information**, there is insufficient information to determine the conclusion

8) During the second week of March, most of the suspect flight cases for the month occurred.

A) **true**, the conclusion can be true given the facts

B) **false**, the conclusion cannot be true given the facts

C) **insufficient information**, there is insufficient information to determine the conclusion

9) Reported cases of suspect air traffic activity increased throughout the month of March.

A) **true**, the conclusion can be true given the facts

B) **false**, the conclusion cannot be true given the facts

C) **insufficient information**, there is insufficient information to determine the conclusion

10) Past experience has shown that whenever there has been an increase in seizures of smuggled contraband, there has also been an increase in suspect flight activity.

A) **true**, the conclusion can be true given the facts

B) **false**, the conclusion cannot be true given the facts

C) **insufficient information**, there is insufficient information to determine the conclusion

SITUATION 3

A criminal act has various stages, including preparing for the crime and actually committing the crime. Sometimes a crime is prepared for and is attempted, but is not actually completed. One way in which a person is 'guilty of the attempt to commit a crime' is formulated as follows: if the objective facts are such that beyond a reasonable doubt the crime would have been completed

but for the intervention of an unforeseen physical event, then an attempt to commit the crime has occurred. A person is also guilty of attempt if the person takes a substantial step towards the commission of the crime.

A case study: two pilots for a foreign airline decided to purchase several guns in California and to take them back to their country without obtaining the required export license. The guns were purchased, stowed in the pilots' luggage, and brought to the airport when the pilots reported for their scheduled flight.

Upon seeing that DHS was intensifying its searches of outbound flights, the pilots decided not to take the guns and called a friend to come to the airport and pick up the luggage containing the guns. The luggage was thereafter picked up and taken from the airport by the friend. The pilots, in the meantime, went to their aircraft, but were intercepted on the jetway by DHS officers and eventually arrested.

11) If the facts of the case prove that the crime would have been completed except for the intensifying of searches of outbound flights, then the pilots are guilty of attempting to export the guns without a license.

- A) **true**, the conclusion can be true given the facts
- B) **false**, the conclusion cannot be true given the facts
- C) **insufficient information**, there is insufficient information to determine the conclusion

12) If the pilots are found not guilty of attempting to export the guns without a license, then the courts did not judge that the pilots took a substantial step towards the commission of the crime.

- A) **true**, the conclusion can be true given the facts
- B) **false**, the conclusion cannot be true given the facts
- C) **insufficient information**, there is insufficient information to determine the conclusion

13) If the facts of the case do not prove that the crime would have been completed except for the intensifying of searches of outbound flights, then the pilots' actions did not progress beyond preparation for the crime.

- A) **true**, the conclusion can be true given the facts
- B) **false**, the conclusion cannot be true given the facts
- C) **insufficient information**, there is insufficient information to determine the conclusion

14) If the courts judge that purchasing, stowing, and bringing the guns to the airport constitute taking a substantial step towards the commission of the crime of exporting the guns without a license, then the pilots are not guilty of an attempt to export the guns.

- A) **true**, the conclusion can be true given the facts
- B) **false**, the conclusion cannot be true given the facts
- C) **insufficient information**, there is insufficient information to determine the conclusion

15) If the pilots are found guilty of attempting to export the guns without a license, then the facts of the case prove that the crime would have been completed except for the intensifying of searches of outbound flights.

- A) **true**, the conclusion can be true given the facts
- B) **false**, the conclusion cannot be true given the facts
- C) **insufficient information**, there is insufficient information to determine the conclusion

SITUATION 4

At airport X, the supervisor is responsible for scheduling progress reviews for all 22 inspectors. To complete all reviews without depleting staff resources during the 4 p.m. shift, she will schedule all reviews to start between the hours of 8 a.m. and 2 p.m. while inspectors are on the day shift. For the next three months, half of the inspectors will be available for appointments during these hours. Inspectors Smith, Ruiz, and Jones are currently on details that will last for the next three months and will not be available during that time. At airport X, an inspector must be on an assigned regular tour of duty in order to be scheduled for a progress review. The supervisor has been able to schedule all progress reviews to be completed within six months.

16) At least fourteen inspectors are not available to be scheduled for progress reviews during the next three months.

- A) **true**, the conclusion can be true given the facts
- B) **false**, the conclusion cannot be true given the facts
- C) **insufficient information**, there is insufficient information to determine the conclusion

17) Inspectors Smith, Ruiz, and Jones are not scheduled to work the day shift at any time during the three months after they have returned to regular duty at airport X.

- A) **true**, the conclusion can be true given the facts
- B) **false**, the conclusion cannot be true given the facts
- C) **insufficient information**, there is insufficient information to determine the conclusion

18) One half of the inspectors at airport X are not currently assigned to the day shift.

- A) **true**, the conclusion can be true given the facts
- B) **false**, the conclusion cannot be true given the facts
- C) **insufficient information**, there is insufficient information to determine the conclusion

19) All 22 inspectors at airport X will be on an assigned regular tour of duty at some point during the next six months.

- A) **true**, the conclusion can be true given the facts
- B) **false**, the conclusion cannot be true given the facts
- C) **insufficient information**, there is insufficient information to determine the conclusion

20) It is not true that some reviews are scheduled to start before 8 a.m. or after 2 p.m.

- A) **true**, the conclusion can be true given the facts
- B) **false**, the conclusion cannot be true given the facts
- C) **insufficient information**, there is insufficient information to determine the conclusion

Answers to the Practice Questions

SITUATION 1

1. Correct Answer: A

The second paragraph tells us that one group of officers investigated the van, while the other group of officers investigated the cages. Therefore, if an officer investigated the van, that officer could not be in the group of officers who investigated the cages. Conversely, if an officer investigated the cages, that officer could not be in the group of officers who investigated the van. Question 1 states that if Officer Ramirez went directly to the empty van, then Officer Ramirez did not discover the two small cages being installed within the large permanent animal cages. Because any officer who investigated the van could not be in the group of officers who investigated the cages, question 1 is true.

2. Correct Answer: B

The court found the parrot-smuggling case to be an extended border search. Therefore, according to the description of extended border searches in the last paragraph, two conditions must be true: (1) the search was carried out after constant surveillance of the van from the time it left the border and (2) the search was carried out according to the law (which authorizes DHS officers to carry out such searches). Question 2 states that the van was not under constant surveillance from the time it left the border until the time it entered the property of Mr. Vogel. Because the seizure was classified as an extended border search and, therefore, was under constant surveillance, question 2 is false.

3. Correct Answer: B

According to the court, the search that located the parrots was an extended border search. Therefore, the court concluded that the search was conducted following continuous surveillance of the van from the border until the smuggled parrots were found immediately after being unloaded from the van. Finding the parrots in the van prior to their being unloaded would have had an even more direct link to the continuity of the surveillance. Therefore, finding the parrots in the van would still be considered an extended border search. Question 3 states that if the officers had found the parrots in the van, the seizure of the birds could not have been classified as being the result of an extended border search. Because finding the parrots in the van would still be an extended border search, question 3 is false.

4. Correct Answer: A

The last paragraph tells us that DHS officers are permitted to perform many official duties, including vehicle searches. Therefore, it cannot be illegal for DHS officers to conduct vehicle searches in the discharge of official duties. Question 4 states that it is not illegal for DHS officers to carry out vehicle searches in the discharge of official duties. Since it cannot be illegal for DHS officers to conduct vehicle searches in the discharge of official duties, question 4 is true.

5. Correct Answer: A

According to the information in the first paragraph, nothing other than the tops of the buildings was visible from the public roads. The permanent cages are not part of the tops of the buildings, therefore, they must not be visible from the public roads. Question 5 states that all the permanent cages located within the enclosure of Mr. Vogel's property were invisible from the public roads. Because only the tops of the buildings were visible from the road, question 5 is true.

SITUATION 2

6. Correct Answer: C

The paragraph does not tell us about what happens when there has been a decrease in reported suspect flight activity. Therefore, the statement that there has also been a decrease in contraband smuggling and in seizures whenever there has been a decrease in reported suspect flight activity cannot be evaluated. Question 6 should be answered Insufficient Information because there is insufficient information available to judge this statement as true or false.

7. Correct Answer: C

The second sentence tells us that there were 120 suspect flight cases in March and the fifth sentence tells us that there were 180 suspect flight cases in April. However, no information is provided about flight cases in May. It is not possible to determine from the information provided that the suspect flight cases in May will be more than those in April. Question 7 states that there will be more than 180 suspect flight cases in May. Since no information is provided about flight cases in May, there is insufficient information to decide if question 7 is true or false.

8. Correct Answer: A

The first two sentences tell us that 75% of the 120 suspect flight cases reported in March were reported during the second week of March. Question 8 states that most of the suspect flight cases for the month occurred during the second week. Since 75% is more than 50%, it is true that most of the cases occurred during the second week.

9. Correct Answer: B

The second sentence tells us that 75% of the reported suspect flight cases in March occurred during the second week. Since more than half of the cases occurred during the first half of the month, it is not possible for the reported flight cases to have increased throughout the month of March. Since this is not possible, question 9 is false.

10. Correct Answer: C

The fourth sentence tells us that, in the preceding six months, whenever there has been an increase in reported suspect flight activity, there had also been an increase in contraband smuggling and an increase in seizures. Question 10 states that whenever there has been an increase in seizures of smuggled contraband, there has also been an increase in suspect flight activity. The fourth sentence tells us about *all* instances in the past six months of reported increases in suspect flight activity, but only tells us about seizures of contraband when there was a reported increase in suspect flight activity. It is possible that there are instances of increased seizures of contraband when there was no corresponding increase in reported suspect flight activity. Therefore, there is insufficient information to draw the conclusion given in question 10.

SITUATION 3

11. Correct Answer: A

According to the first paragraph, if facts demonstrate that a crime would have been completed except for the intervention of an unforeseen physical event, then an attempt to commit the crime has occurred. This question indicates that the searches stopped the crime from being completed. Accordingly, the pilots are guilty of attempting to commit the crime. Therefore, question 11 is true.

12. Correct Answer: A

According to the first paragraph, a person is also guilty of attempt whenever the person takes a substantial step towards the commission of a crime. Therefore, if a person is found not guilty of attempt, then the person could not have been found to take a substantial step towards the commission of a crime. Question 12 states that if the pilots are found not guilty of attempting to export the guns without a license, then the courts did not judge that the pilots took a substantial step towards the commission of the crime. Because the pilots could not have been found to have taken a substantial step towards the commission of the crime if they were found not guilty of attempt, question 12 is true.

13. Correct Answer: C

Question 13 indicates that the pilots' actions did not progress beyond preparation for the crime if the facts of the case do not prove that the crime would have been completed except for the intensifying of searches of outbound flights. While there is no certain proof in the paragraph that the pilots' actions constitute an attempt to commit the crime, the possibility remains. Because it is not certain that the pilots' actions did not progress beyond preparation, the answer to question 13 is insufficient information.

14. Correct Answer: B

The first paragraph states that a person is guilty of attempt if the person takes a substantial step towards the commission of the crime. Applying that formulation to this case, if the court judges that the pilots' actions constitute taking a substantial step towards the commission of the crime of exporting the guns without a license, it follows that the pilots are guilty of attempting to export the guns. Question 14 states that if the courts judge that purchasing, stowing, and bringing the guns to the airport constitute taking a substantial step towards the commission of the crime of exporting the guns without a license, then the pilots are not guilty of an attempt to export the guns. Because the pilots would be guilty of an attempt to export the guns in the case, question 14 is false.

15. Correct Answer: C

The first paragraph provides two conditions under which the pilots could be found guilty of attempting to export the guns without a license. The scenario does not say if either condition was considered by the court to be met. Therefore, if all we know is that the pilots are found guilty of attempting to export the guns, we cannot yet determine which condition the court determined to be relevant in establishing the attempt. Question 15 supposes that the pilots are found guilty of attempting to export the guns without a license. This supposition alone provides insufficient information to determine under which condition the court found the pilots to be guilty of attempting to export the guns. Therefore, the answer to question 15 is insufficient information.

SITUATION 4**16. Correct Answer: B**

The first sentence tells us that there are 22 inspectors at airport X and the third sentence tells us that half of the inspectors will be available for appointments during the next three months. This means that 11 inspectors are available and 11 inspectors are not available for appointments during the next three months. Question 16 states that at least fourteen inspectors are not available for appointments during the next three months. Since this is not true, question 16 is false.

17. Correct Answer: B

Sentence 2 tells us that all reviews will be scheduled during the day shift. Sentence 5 tells us that an inspector must be on an assigned regular tour of duty in order to be scheduled for a progress review. Taken together, these statements mean that inspectors Smith, Ruiz, and Jones are not available for a review in the next three months. Statement 6 tells us that all reviews were scheduled in the next six months. This means that inspectors Smith, Ruiz, and Jones must be scheduled to work the day shift some time during the three months after they return to regular duty. Question 16 states that inspectors Smith, Ruiz, and Jones are *not* scheduled to work the day shift any time during the three months after they return to regular duty. This must be false because, if it were true, then inspectors Smith, Ruiz, and Jones could not have been scheduled for progress reviews during the three months after they returned to regular duty.

18. Correct Answer: C

The second sentence tells us that all reviews will be scheduled on the day shift. The first sentence tells us that there are 22 inspectors and the third sentence tells us that half of the inspectors will be available for appointments during the next three months. This means that 11 inspectors *are or will be* on the day shift during the next three months. We are not given information about how many inspectors are *currently* on the day shift. Question 18 states that one half (11) of the inspectors are not currently assigned to the day shift. Since we cannot know this from the paragraph, there is insufficient information to conclude if question 18 is true or false.

19. Correct Answer: A

Sentence 5 tells us that all reviews will be scheduled while inspectors are on an assigned regular tour of duty. Sentence 6 tells us that all of the inspectors were scheduled for reviews within six months. Therefore, all inspectors will be on an assigned regular tour of duty during the next six months. Since question 19 states that all inspectors will be on an assigned regular tour of duty at some point during the next six months, question 19 is true.

20. Correct Answer: A

Sentence 2 tells us that all reviews will be scheduled to start between the hours of 8 a.m. and 2 p.m. Since all of the reviews will be scheduled between 8 a.m. and 2 p.m., it cannot be the case that any of the reviews are before 8 a.m. or after 2 p.m. Since question 20 states that it is *not* the case that some reviews are scheduled to start before 8 a.m. or after 2 p.m., question 20 is true.

Study Resources

There are multiple study resources available for free or a small fee. These resources can provide you with basic strategies to improve critical thinking skills. Many of the materials contain homework assignments and practice exercises for independent completion.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

Office of Human Resources Management, Personnel Research and Assessment Division, U.S. Customs and Border Protection. (Reviewed, 2011). **Manual of Job-Related Thinking Skills.** https://www.cbp.gov/sites/default/files/documents/manual_3.pdf or by navigating to www.cbp.gov, clicking ‘Careers’ section, then ‘Study Guides/Preparation Manuals.’

Whimbey, A., & Lochhead, J. (1999). **Problem Solving and Comprehension.** Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum. ISBN# 0805832742.

INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES/COURSEWARE

There are multiple, free online course available. These courses can provide you with basic strategies to improve critical thinking skills. Many of the courses contain homework assignments for independent completion.

Pyn, G. **Fundamentals: Introduction to Critical Thinking.** Khan Academy Course. <https://www.khanacademy.org/partner-content/wi-phi/critical-thinking/v/intro-to-critical-thinking>.

Saetti, J. **Philosophy 103: Introduction to Logic.** Lander University Course. Greenwood, SC. <http://philosophy.lander.edu/logic/index.html>

Talbot, M. **Critical Reasoning: A Romp Through the Foothills of Logic.** University of Oxford Podcast. <http://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/series/critical-reasoning-romp-through-foothills-logic>

Talbot, M. **Critical Reasoning for Beginners.** University of Oxford Podcast <http://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/series/critical-reasoning-beginners>

PRACTICE TESTS

There are several practice tests available for free or a small fee. These tests do not include job-related scenarios, or exactly mirror the question types and format of the CBP assessments. However, these practice tests can provide you with experience evaluating information presented in computerized scenarios to draw conclusions. Many of the assessments are timed, providing practice performing within time constraints. A sample of websites that contain practice questions is listed below.

You can locate additional interactive practice tests by performing a keyword search on the internet. Suggested keywords include practice tests and combinations of any/all of the following words: critical thinking, reasoning, deductive, Venn, inductive, and free.

CEB SHL Test Preparation and Career Centre. Interactive website with a variety of free tests – requires registration. <https://www.cebglobal.com/shldirect/en/practice-tests>.

GMAT Critical Reasoning. Majortests.com. Interactive website with a variety of free tests.
http://www.majortests.com/gmat/critical_reasoning.php

Numerical, Verbal, Inductive, and Logical Reasoning Tests. Assessment Day Practice Aptitude Tests. Interactive website with a variety of free tests.
<https://www.assessmentday.co.uk/free/>

Verbal Reasoning Tests. Practice Aptitude Tests. Interactive website with timed practice tests.
<http://www.practiceaptitudetests.com/verbal-reasoning-tests/>

Verbal Reasoning Test. VerbalReasoningTest.org. Interactive website with a variety of free tests.
<http://www.verbalreasoningtest.org/index.html>

Note: Website addresses can change rapidly. If you cannot locate the link listed, please search by copying and pasting the entire reference into your browser. Report broken links or provide feedback on this guide via email to PROMSUPPORT@cbp.dhs.gov.

MANAGERIAL WRITING SKILLS

Assessment Overview

The Managerial Writing Skills assessment measures your ability to organize ideas, present facts logically, and use correct English grammar, punctuation, and vocabulary.

During this assessment, you will review written materials for errors, clarity, and logical organization. After reviewing the materials, you will select a multiple-choice response to correct the written material or to indicate that no changes are needed.

Writing Skills Strategies

This section provides general suggestions about how to complete the Writing Skills Exercise.

- ✓ Review the basic rules of English punctuation, grammar, syntax, usage, sentence, and paragraph organization below.
- ✓ Practice applying these concepts in your daily work by reading the information you receive to identify writing errors (e.g., emails, memos)
- ✓ Practice writing emails, memos, and other documents that conform to the rules listed below.

The following sections contain a brief review of specific writing skill areas. Each skill area is defined, then applicable rules of application and examples are provided. If the concepts are unfamiliar or difficult for you, refer to the study resources listed on [page 43](#).

CAPITALIZATION

- This is the use of capital letters to place special emphasis on particular letters and to set them off from lower-case letters.
- Sentences always begin with a capital letter.
- The first letter of a quotation is always capitalized.
- Proper nouns, that is, nouns that name particular persons, places, or things, must be capitalized.

Examples: Appalachian Mountains, Mississippi River, Brooklyn Bridge

- Titles that precede a proper name are capitalized; those that follow a proper name are not.
Examples: Chairperson John Smith and John Smith, the chairperson

PUNCTUATION

- This is the use of periods, commas, semicolons, colons, question marks, exclamation points, dashes, apostrophes, brackets, parentheses, slashes, and quotation marks to convey the pauses and gestures that we use in speech to clarify and emphasize meaning.
- Use a period to end a sentence.
Example: She went to the beach.
- Use a period after abbreviations.
Example: U.S.
- Use a comma to separate independent clauses in a compound sentence.
Example: Suzanne made a presentation, and then she spent the rest of the day touring the city.
- Use a comma to separate an introductory phrase or clause from the main clause of a sentence.
Example: After completing the work, the contractor left the site.

- Place a comma after every item in a series.
Example: *The new office is furnished with a desk, a computer, two chairs, and a file cabinet.*
- Two or more adjectives that modify the noun that they precede are separated by commas.
Example: *The cold, windy morning was not a good beginning for their vacation.*
- A semicolon is used to separate elements in a series when some of the elements already contain commas.
Example: *Sally wishes us to attend the first, third, and fifth sessions on Wednesday; the second, fourth, and sixth sessions on Thursday; and the first only on Friday.*
- A semicolon is used to join two closely related independent clauses that are not joined by a conjunction.
Example: *The project began slowly; thereafter, additional staff were assigned to it.*

SENTENCE

- This is a grammatically independent group of words that serves as a unit of expression.
- A sentence normally contains a stated *subject* (the noun(s) or pronoun(s) the sentence is about), and it must contain a *predicate* (the part that says something about or directs the subject) that consists of at least one word, a verb.

VERB

- A verb is word or phrase used to assert an action or state of being.
- Verb Voice shows whether the subject performs an action (active voice) or receives it (passive voice).
Example (active voice): *The consultant wrote a proposal.*
Example (passive voice): *The proposal was written by the consultant.*
- Verb Tense shows the time of the action of the verb. There are active and a passive forms of all tenses in English.

<i>Tense</i>	<i>Examples of Active Voice</i>	<i>Examples of Passive Voice</i>
Present	she takes; she is taking	she is taken; she is being taken
Past	she took; she was taking	she was taken; she was being taken
Future	she will take; she will be taking	she will be taken
Present perfect	she has taken; she has been taking	she has been taken
Past perfect	she had taken; she had been taking	she had been taken
Future perfect	she will have taken; she will have been taking	she will have been taken

The *present* tense represents action that is taking place now. **Example:** *She is attending training today.*

The *past* tense represents action that took place in past time. **Example:** *He wrote five letters yesterday.*

The *future* tense places action in future time. **Example:** *She will attend the meeting later today.*

The *present perfect* tense represents action completed before the present time. **Example:** *He has taken training.*

The *past perfect* tense represents action that occurs before another past action. **Example:** *She counted the letters he had written.*

The *future perfect* tense represents action that will be completed before a specific time in the future. **Example:** *By next week, he will have completed the analysis.*

- The mood of a verb shows whether an action is fact (indicative mood), something other than fact, such as a possibility, wish, or supposition (subjunctive mood), or a command (imperative mood). The subjunctive mood is also used to express a condition contrary to fact.

Example of indicative mood: *They are going to the ball game.*

Example of subjunctive mood: *I hope that he goes to the ball game.*

Example of imperative mood: *Go to the ball game now!*

- The infinitive form of a verb that expresses action or existence without reference to person, number, or tense. An infinitive may be used as the subject of a sentence, or as an adjectival modifier.

Example(s): To run is relaxing. (subject)

He had several papers to review during the trip. (modifier for ‘papers’)

- A split infinitive has a word or several words between the *to* and the *verb* following it. Splitting an infinitive is generally considered incorrect, especially if more than one word intervenes between *to* and the verb. **Incorrect example:** You should try *to*, if you can, *attend* the briefing. **Correct usage:** You should try *to attend* the briefing, if you can.
- Gerunds are verbs ending in *ing* that are used as a noun. In fact, another name for a gerund is a verbal noun. A gerund may be used as the subject of a sentence or as the object of a sentence or a prepositional phrase.

Example: *Drawing was his favorite personal activity.*

Example: *She preferred walking over bicycling.* (Walking is the object of the verb preferred and bicycling is the object of the preposition over.)

- Participles are verbs used as adjectives. Simple participle forms end in *ed* or *ing*.

Examples: The candidate felt *betrayed*. The New Year’s Eve party was *exciting*.

- When a participial phrase seems to modify a word that it cannot sensibly modify, then it is a dangling participle or phrase. **Incorrect example:** Sailing on the open sea, many dolphins were spotted. (*Sailing* does not modify dolphins.) **Correct usage:** Sailing on the open sea, we spotted many dolphins.

NOUN

A noun names a person, place, thing, quality, idea, or action.

- A common noun identifies one or more of a class of persons, places, things, qualities, ideas, or actions that are alike.

Example: *The girl chained her bicycle to the fence.*

- A proper noun identifies a particular person, place, thing, quality, idea, or action. (*Note:* Proper nouns must be capitalized.)

Example: *Joe Brown drove his Lincoln Towncar to the Kennedy Center.*

- A collective noun identifies a group of people or things that are related or acting as one.

Example: *The jury arrives at the courthouse each day at nine in the morning.*

- If the individual members of the group are referred to, then the plural verb can be used.

Example: *A group of employees are sharing supplies with each other.*

- The possessive of a singular noun is formed by adding an apostrophe and *s* to the noun.

Examples: *the boy’s sweater; Alice’s car*

- The possessive of a plural noun ending in *s* is formed by adding an apostrophe only.

Examples: *agents’ salaries; workers’ union*

PRONOUN

- Pronouns are used in place of nouns, most frequently to eliminate monotonous repetition of the noun.
- Demonstrative pronouns point out a specific person or thing. *Examples: this, that, these, those*
- Indefinite pronouns refer to people or things generally rather than specifically.
Examples: all, any, anybody, anyone, anything, both, each, either, everybody, everyone, everything, few, many, most, much, neither, no one, nobody, none, nothing, one, other, several, some, somebody, someone, something, such
- *None* is generally used in a singular sense. If you think of *none* as *no one person or thing*, then it is easy to see that it is singular in meaning and takes a singular verb. However, when *none* is used in the sense of *not two* or *no amount*, then a plural verb is used.
Example: None of the team members are in agreement.
- Interrogative pronouns are used to ask questions. *Examples: who, what, which*
- Relative pronouns relate a subordinate part of a sentence to the main clause.
Examples: who, whoever, whom, whomever, whose, which, whichever, what, that
- Personal pronouns refer to persons or things and change form in three different persons: first person (the person speaking), second person (the person spoken to), and third person (person or thing spoken about).
 - ✓ First person pronouns: I, we (used as subject of sentences and clauses)
me, us (used as objects of verbs and prepositions)
Examples: Bill and I are going. She told Sally and me.
 - ✓ Second person pronouns: you (used for singular and plural, for subjects and objects)
 - ✓ Third person pronouns: he, she, it, they (used as subject of sentences and clauses)
him, her, it, them (used as objects of verbs and prepositions)
- Possessive pronouns determine ownership or possession without using an apostrophe followed by an *s*. *Examples: my, mine, our, ours, yours, his, hers, its, their, theirs*
- Reflexive pronouns refer back to the pronoun used as the subject of the sentence.
Examples: I burned myself. You are deceiving yourself.
- Intensive pronouns are used to emphasize the first pronoun.
Examples: You yourself must register. I myself do not understand.

ADJECTIVE AND ADVERB

- An adjective is a word that modifies a noun. An adverb is a word that modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb.
- An adjective or an adverb should be placed so that there is no doubt as to which word it modifies.
Example: The angry boy quickly threw the ball. Angry is an adjective modifying the noun boy. Quickly is an adverb modifying the verb threw.
- Adjectives and adverbs show degrees of quality or quantity by means of their positive, comparative, and superlative forms. The positive form expresses no comparison at all. The comparative form adds an *-er* to the positive form of the adjective or adverb or prefixes the positive form with the word *more* to express a greater degree or a comparison between two persons or things. The superlative form adds an *-est* to the positive form of the adjective or adverb or prefixes the positive form with the word *most* to express the greatest degree of quantity or quality among three or more persons or things.

ARTICLE

- An article refers to a noun and gives definiteness or indefiniteness to the noun.
- The English articles are *a*, *an*, and *the*.
- *A* and *an* are the indefinite articles. They are used for general nouns or when the audience does not know which thing you are referring to. *A* is used before words that begin with a consonant, and *an* is used before words that begin with a vowel. **Examples:** *An attorney will meet you today.*
- *The* is the definite article. It is used when the audience knows which thing is being referred to. **Example:** *The attorney that you met with last week has returned your call.*

PREPOSITION

- Prepositions connect a noun to some other word in the sentence.
- Prepositions usually establish a relationship of time or location. The use of a preposition automatically creates a prepositional phrase.
- There are over 40 prepositions in English, some of which are: *about*, *around*, *before*, *at*, *below*, *by*, *for*, *from*, *in*, *of*, *on*, *to*, *through*, *up*, *upon*, and *with*.

CONJUNCTION

- Conjunctions join together sentences, clauses, phrases, or words (also known as a connective).
- Conjunctions that connect two or more parts of a sentence that are of equal rank (Example: two nouns or verbs or phrases) are called coordinating conjunctions.
Examples: *and*, *but*, *or*, *nor*, *for*, and sometimes *yet*
- Subordinating conjunctions connect dependent (subordinate) clauses to independent (main) clauses. Subordinating conjunctions include *though*, *if*, *as*, *when*, *while*, and *since*.
Example: *Since he took the course for his own advancement, his employer wouldn't pay for it.*
- Correlative conjunctions are pairs of words that connect sentence elements that are of equal rank. Correlative conjunctions must always appear together in the same sentence.
Examples: *either-or*, *neither-nor*, *whether-or*, *both-and*, and *not only-but also*

AVOIDING VERB, NOUN, AND PRONOUN SHIFTS

- Unnecessary shifts in person, number, tense, or voice confuse readers and seriously weaken communication. The examples below indicate these types of errors.
- A shift in person occurs when a writer shifts back and forth among the first, second, and third persons.
Incorrect example: *If you* want to pass the physical, *a person* has to exercise daily.
- A shift in number occurs when a plural pronoun is used to refer back to a singular antecedent or vice versa.
Incorrect example: *Anyone* who shops in that department store must seriously consider *their* budget.
- Unnecessary shifts in tense more commonly occur within a paragraph rather than within an individual sentence.
Incorrect example: After the historian *spent* several hours describing the armies' strategies, he *gave* a horrifying account of the attack. He *points* out in great detail what *is* going on in the minds of each of the soldiers. (This paragraph begins in the past tense and shifts to present tense.)

- A shift in voice occurs when a writer makes unnecessary shifts between the active and the passive voice.

Incorrect example: *I wrote the journal article; the book chapter was also written by me.* (In this example, the first clause is active voice and the second shifts to passive voice.)

SENTENCE ORGANIZATION WITHIN PARAGRAPHS

- A paragraph presents a larger unit of thought than a sentence can contain.
- A paragraph should have *unity*, that is, internal consistency. It should not digress from the dominant idea expressed in the topic sentence.
- A paragraph should have *completeness*. It should present enough detailed information about the topic sentence to answer any general questions the reader may have. More specific questions would require additional paragraphs with new topic sentences.
- A paragraph should have *coherence*. Sentences should flow into each other so that the reader experiences the paragraph as an integrated unit, not as a collection of separate sentences.
- A paragraph should have *order*. Like structure in a larger work, order in a paragraph grows partly out of the material and is partly imposed by the writer. Most paragraphs and essays follow one of the two patterns that follow.
 1. *From the general to the particular:* This type of paragraph begins with a topic sentence that serves as an introductory summary of the topic. The remaining sentences explain or illustrate this statement, so that the idea becomes increasingly clear as the paragraph progresses. The topic sentence is usually at or near the beginning of the paragraph.
 2. *From the particular to the general:* This type of paragraph is the reverse of the previous pattern. It begins with a series of explanatory or illustrative statements that lead to a general statement or summary. The topic sentence is usually at or near the end of the paragraph.
- A paragraph can be looked upon as a microcosm, an exact parallel in miniature of the entire work:
 - It has a dominant idea, usually expressed in a topic sentence.
 - The dominant idea is developed by examples, comparisons, explanations, or arguments to make the meaning of the topic sentence clear.
 - There may be a concluding restatement of the topic idea.

Practice Questions

The following sample questions represent the types of items that you are likely to find on the actual assessment. The answers can be found on [page 41](#).

For questions 1-3, choose the one answer that represents a correction that should be made to the sentence. If no change is necessary, choose option (E).

1. During the reporting period, this port detected ten attempts to illegally import bio-hazards and arrested three suspects with outstanding warrants, none of whom were United States citizens.
(A) change whom to who
(B) change none of whom were to none of whom was
(C) change bio-hazards and apprehended to bio-hazards. Apprehended were
(D) change whom were to them being
(E) no change is necessary
2. The managers from our agency met with the managers from the other agency to familiarize them with the operation; and to identify training needs.
(A) change managers from our agency to manager's from our agency
(B) change operation; and to identify to operation; and, to identify
(C) change operation; and to operation and
(D) change them with the operation; to them, with the operation.
(E) no change is necessary
3. When writing a report on worker's compensation incidents, it is important to include dates, times, names, and details associated from the cases for future reference.
(A) change incidents to incedents
(B) change writing to writting
(C) change from to with
(D) change for future reference to for reference in the future
(E) no change is necessary

For questions 4 – 6, choose the one answer that is the best revision to the underlined word(s) or phrase(s) in the paragraph. If no revision to the underlined word(s) or phrase(s) is necessary, choose option (E).

If there are two underlined sections in the same paragraph, each possible answer will consist of two revisions, one for each underlined section. The two revisions will be separated by a slash (/). The first revision will be for the first underlined section in the paragraph, and the second revision will be for the second underlined section in the paragraph.

4. The tread on the right rear tire of the officer's vehicle tore lose, slamming against the inside tire well and damage was caused for both the interior and exterior of the vehicle.
(A) was torn lose / damages were caused to both
(B) tore loose / causing damage to both
(C) tore loose / damages were caused to both
(D) tore lose / causing damage to both
(E) no change is necessary

5. All procurement forms should be produced either by completing the electronic version of the document nor by printing electronic copies and then completing the forms manually. The information collected in these reports provides a means of measuring the impact of Federal contracting between the U.S. economy.
- (A) or the printing of / among
 - (B) or by printing / on
 - (C) nor the printing of / across
 - (D) nor by printing / within which
 - (E) no change is necessary
6. I was almost finished with the report when the copy machine malfunctioned. It was then that my co-worker had stepped in to help me with the copier.
- (A) It was then that my co-worker stepped in
 - (B) It was then my co-worker having stepped in
 - (C) It had been then that my co-worker stepped in
 - (D) It had been then that my co-worker had stepped in
 - (E) no change is necessary

For questions 7 and 8, select the correct sentence order to form paragraphs that are well-organized, clear, and coherent. If no change to the sentence order is necessary, choose option (E).

7. (1) The management function of planning is the foundation and framework for all of the other management functions.
- (2) Even though the planning function is critical for effectively carrying out the other management functions, it is interesting that managers vary considerably in their perceptions of the importance of the planning function.
- (3) Although textbooks differ with respect to their use of terminology, many management textbooks refer to five functions of management.
- (4) Without the planning function, however, the other management functions are likely to be carried out in an aimless manner.
- (5) The other functions of management include: (1) organizing, (2) staffing and staff development, (3) directing and leading, and (4) evaluating and controlling.
- A) 1 – 5 – 2 – 4 – 3
 - B) 1 – 5 – 3 – 2 – 4
 - C) 3 – 4 – 5 – 2 – 1
 - D) 3 – 1 – 5 – 4 – 2
 - E) no change to the sentence order is necessary

8. (1) Organizations must have competent managers to cope with the growing complexity of problems affecting their operations.
- (2) Managerial competency is acquired as a result of formal education.
- (3) Also, managerial competency is acquired as a result of experience that is gained in using decision-making and other managerial skills on the job.
- (4) Formal developmental programs that enable a manager to gain the needed learning experiences both on and off the job can contribute greatly to the growth of this competency.
- (5) Consequently, more attention is being given to such programs as a means of helping managers to perform more effectively and to realize their potential.
- A) 4 – 5 – 2 – 3 – 1
- B) 2 – 3 – 1 – 4 – 5
- C) 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 1
- D) 1 – 4 – 5 – 2 – 3
- E) no change to the sentence order is necessary

Answers to Practice Questions

1. Correct Answer: E

The sentence is correct as written.

2. Correct Answer: C

Semicolons are used to connect two independent clauses without a coordinating conjunction. This sentence contains only one independent clause. The coordinating conjunction ‘and’ is linking two infinitive phrases (not clauses) that describe the clause. Therefore, a semicolon is inappropriate here.

3. Correct Answer: C

The correct term is ‘associated with’ and not ‘associated from.’ Objects are ‘associated with’ one another, which means they are related to each other in some way. The correction in D is not required because ‘for future reference’ is already succinct and correct.

4. Correct Answer: B

The verb ‘tore’ cannot be modified by another verb, ‘lose.’ The correct word is the adverb, ‘loose.’ Also, the sentence begins in the active voice, and the active voice should be maintained throughout. Therefore, ‘causing damage to both’ is preferable to ‘damages were caused to both.’

5. Correct Answer: B

The first sentence describes two optional ways of completing the procurement forms; therefore, the correlative conjunctions (‘either’-‘or’) should be used. Correlative conjunctions must be parallel in form. Also, the preposition ‘on’ should be used to describe the impact of something on something else (in this case, ‘the impact of Federal contracting on the U.S. economy’). Answer A uses the correct correlative conjunction, but changes the parallelism of the prepositional phrases (‘by completing...or the printing of’) and uses the preposition ‘among’ that is used when referring to three or more things. Answers C, D, and E use the incorrect correlative conjunction ‘nor.’

6. Correct Answer: A

The first sentence sets the context of the event in the simple past tense. The content of the second sentence does not warrant a change in tense, and therefore the simple past tense should be maintained throughout. ‘It was then’ and ‘my co-worker stepped in’ in answer A are in the simple past tense, and so answer A is correct. Answers C and D contain other tenses, and answer B inappropriately replaces the verb with a participial phrase.

7. Correct Answer: D

The most logical order for these sentences is to begin with the topic of the paragraph, which is the reference of many management textbooks to five management functions (3). Next is the first reference to the planning function and the ‘other management functions’ (1). Then, a listing of the four ‘other’ functions is provided (5). A reiteration of the importance of the planning function is presented (4) and is followed by the interesting fact that managers vary in their perception of the importance of the planning function (2).

8. Correct Answer: E

The topic of the paragraph is the need for organizations to have competent managers (1). Next, information is provided about how managerial competencies are acquired, specifically off the job (2) and on the job (3). The idea of formal developmental programs to gain the needed managerial competencies is presented next (4). Then, the idea that organizations are giving more attention to such programs is presented (5).

Study Resources

RECOMMENDED READINGS

Alred, G., Brusaw, C., & Oliu, W. (2015). **The Business Writer's Handbook**. New York, NY: Bedford/St. Martin's Press. ISBN# 145767551X.

Campbell, D. (1995). **Better Sentence Writing in 30 Minutes a Day**. Franklin Lakes, NJ: The Career Press. ISBN# 1564142035.

Chan, J. F. (2008). **E-Mail: A Write It Well Guide -- How to Write and Manage e-mail in the Workplace**. Oakland, CA: Write it Well. ISBN# 096374559X.

The Chicago Manual of Style. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2010. ISBN# 978-0226104201. <http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html> (30 day trial version)

Flesch, R., & Lass, A. H. (1996). **The Classic Guide to Better Writing**. New York, NY: Harper Collins. ISBN# 978-0062730480.

Office of the Executive Secretariat. U.S. Customs and Border Protection. (2017). **Executive Secretariat Style Manual**.
<https://uconnect.cbpnet.cbp.dhs.gov/sites/OC/OES/OES%20Correspondence%20Documents/OES%20Style%20Manual.pdf> .

Oliu, W., Brusaw, C., & Alred, G. (2012). **Writing That Works: Communicating Effectively on the Job**. Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's. ISBN# 978-1457611131.

Piotrowski, M. V. (1996). **Effective Business Writing**. New York, NY: HarperCollins. ISBN# 0062733818.

Savin, W. A. (2010). **The Gregg Reference Manual: A Manual of Style, Grammar, Usage, and Formatting**. New York, NY: McGraw Hill Education. ISBN# 0073397105.

Straus, J., Kaufman, L., & Stern, T. (2014). **The Blue Book of Grammar and Punctuation: An Easy-to-Use Guide with Clear Rules, Real-World Examples, and Reproducible Quizzes** (11th ed.).ed.)San Francisco, CA: Wiley. ISBN#: 1118785568

Strunk, W., Jr., & White, E. B. (2000). **The Elements of Style**. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon. ISBN# 0205313426.

U.S. Government Printing Office. (2008). **U.S. Government Printing Office Style Manual**. Washington, DC. ISBN# 978-1470054991. <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/GPO-STYLEMANUAL-2008/content-detail.html>

INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES/COURSEWARE

There are multiple, free online courses available. These courses can provide you with basic strategies to improve your writing skills. Many of the courses contain homework assignments for independent completion.

Breslow, L., & Heagney, T. 15.279 **Management Communication for Undergraduates. Fall 2012.** Massachusetts Institute of Technology: MIT Open Courseware, <https://ocw.mit.edu> (enter course title in search engine) License: Creative Commons BY-NC-SA.

Purdue Online Writing Lab. Interactive website with sections on mechanics, grammar, punctuation. Includes practice exercises. <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/1/>

Tedholm, C., & Savoldy, C. **ENGL001: English Composition I.** Saylor Academy Course. <https://learn.saylor.org/course/view.php?id=43>

Wynn Norman, P. **BUS210: Corporate Communication.** Saylor Academy Course. <https://learn.saylor.org/course/view.php?id=110§ionid=1099>

PRACTICE TESTS

There are many practice tests available for free or a small fee. While these tests do not mirror the format of the promotional assessments, they can provide valuable review and practice answering questions in computerized format. A sample of websites that contain practice questions is listed below.

You can locate additional interactive practice tests by performing a keyword search on the internet. Suggested keywords include practice tests and combinations of any/all of the following words: writing skills, grammar, punctuation, mechanics, and free.

John Jay College of Criminal Justice, City University of New York. **Writing Tutorials.** E-Resources Center. Interactive website with practice tests. <http://jjc.jjay.cuny.edu/erc/writing/index.php>

The Business Writing Center. **The Most Common Business Usage Errors.** Interactive website with practice test. <http://businesswriting.com/tests/commonusage.html>

Using English for Academic Purposes - A Guide for Students in Higher Education. Interactive website with practice tests. <http://www.uefap.com/writing/exercise/exwripar.htm>

Note: Website addresses can change rapidly. If you cannot locate the link listed, please search by copying and pasting the entire reference into your browser. Report broken links or provide feedback on this guide via email to PROMSUPPORT@cbp.dhs.gov

IN-BASKET JOB SIMULATION

Assessment Overview

This assessment measures your ability to solve problems, delegate, prioritize, and make decisions about critical situations that arise daily in supervisory and managerial jobs. During the In-Basket, you will assume the role of supervisor or manager in a fictional port.

The exercise is administered in two parts with separate time limits. First, you will be prompted by the testing system to request hard copies of a calendar and organizational chart. You must click a button indicating that you have received this information in order to proceed with the assessment.

The remaining information in the assessment will be provided to you electronically. You will receive background information about the location, staff, and major issues, as well as a series of emails for resolution. During this portion of the assessment, you should carefully evaluate all of the information. You will not be able to print out these materials; however, you may take notes on the scrap paper provided at the test center, as well as on your organizational chart and calendars. You may refer to both your notes as well as the electronic materials at any time during the exercise.

Next, you will respond to a series of multiple-choice questions regarding the actions you will take based on the information you have reviewed. Questions may require you to solve problems, make decisions, develop plans, evaluate progress, delegate responsibilities, set priorities, and make notifications. Each question addresses one or more of the management competencies described above.

You will be allowed to refer to the background information, your notes, and the electronic materials while answering the multiple-choice questions. Your notes will not factor into your in-basket score; they are for your benefit only. All notes must be turned into the proctor at the end of the testing session.

In-Basket Strategies

This section provides general suggestions for completing the In-Basket Exercise.

- ✓ Review the definitions of the management competencies listed on [page 5](#) for a better understanding of the behaviors measured in the assessment.
- ✓ Plan your time wisely. You will have a set period of time to read the materials and answer a series of multiple-choice questions based on these materials.
- ✓ When answering the multiple-choice questions, choose the one answer that is closest to how you would handle the situation.

The section on the next page contains specific strategies for prioritizing the information presented during this exercise.

DOCUMENT REVIEW

Consider the following questions as you review each e-mail message:

- ✓ What is the most critical issue raised in this e-mail?
- ✓ What factors are most important to consider in deciding how to respond to the situation raised in this e-mail?
- ✓ What actions are likely to be most effective in dealing with the situation presented in this e-mail?
- ✓ What specific steps would you take to resolve the situations in this e-mail? Which of these steps would you take first?
- ✓ Which issues would create the greatest burden on your organization's resources? What resources would you need to resolve the situation in this e-mail? Are there other situations that would compete for these resources?
- ✓ What indicators would provide the strongest evidence that the way you dealt with the situation had been successful?
- ✓ What steps would you take to follow up to ensure that your efforts are on schedule and within resource allocations?
- ✓ What events are likely to cause delays or changes in resources?
- ✓ Does the information in this e-mail provide insight into issues presented in other documents?
- ✓ Who else needs the information presented in this e-mail? How soon must you present this information to these individuals?
- ✓ What should you do with this e-mail once you have read it? Do you need to transmit it to other individuals in your organization? Should it be filed? Can you discard it?
- ✓ What priority would you assign to each issue presented in the in-basket?
- ✓ When must each situation be handled? If the situation does not require immediate attention, can you delay action? How long can you delay action?
- ✓ Is this situation something that you should handle personally? If not, who on your staff should?

If the concepts are unfamiliar or difficult for you, refer to study resources listed on [page 68](#).

In-Basket Practice Exercise

INSTRUCTIONS

The questions in this exercise measure your ability to delegate responsibilities, set priorities, solve problems, make decisions, develop plans, and evaluate progress. Proficiency in these competencies enables supervisors and managers to effectively resolve issues. Typical concerns include budget and financial management, program oversight, human resources management, resource management, and public relations.

In this exercise, you will assume the role of the Acting Port Director at a fictitious port of entry. You will receive 14 e-mails that a supervisor or manager could expect to find in his or her in-basket. Review these e-mails and consider how you would handle the issues and problems they raise. When you have completed your review, answer the set of multiple-choice questions to indicate how you would respond to the problems presented. Individual questions may address a single e-mail, a group of e-mails, or the general situation created by the package of materials. To the extent possible, the multiple-choice questions are arranged in the same order as the e-mails. Therefore, the e-mails should be kept in their original order.

As you are reviewing the e-mails, do **not** prepare responses to them. For example, do not write e-mail messages, letters, or memos. Instead, to prepare for the multiple-choice questions, you may find it helpful to make notes about your strategies for resolving the issues presented in the e-mails. Consider *what* actions should be taken, *when* the actions should be taken, *who* should perform such actions, and *who* must be contacted while taking these actions. Also, use the calendars provided to record appointments and events discussed in the in-basket. You will find this information helpful as you answer the multiple-choice questions.

In this exercise and in the actual assessment, there are no references to any specific year. Calendar dates are given as a month and a day, such as ‘May 1.’ All events have taken place during the current calendar year. Finally, all individuals and situations described in the in-basket materials are fictitious.

Please note that although this practice exercise is similar in content and structure to the actual In-basket Job Simulation, you should expect the actual In-basket Job Simulation to be longer and more in-depth.

The In-Basket Materials

On the following pages, you will find a **scenario** that describes the roles and responsibilities of the staff in a hypothetical port known as the Port of Dillon and that outlines the issues facing them. An **organizational chart** and **calendars** for July, August, and September are also provided. Following the scenario, you will find **14 documents** (numbered in the lower right-hand corner). All materials are based on incidents encountered by supervisors and managers in CBP to simulate the job.

Complete your review of these materials and the e-mails before proceeding to the multiple-choice questions. You may wish to time yourself to gain practice performing under time constraints. A time period of 20 minutes is recommended for the materials review.

After you have completed your review of the materials, use your notes to answer the multiple-choice questions that ask how you would handle the situations presented in the e-mails. You may wish to time yourself to gain practice performing under time constraints. A time period of 16 minutes is recommended for the multiple-choice questions. You can compare your responses to the answers and explanations that we have provided for you.

The Scenario

Your Role: You are Jessie White, a team supervisor in the Port of Dillon. As a team supervisor, you are responsible for the day-to-day operational issues confronting your team. However, because you are very experienced, you are often called upon to do special projects that involve broader organizational issues. Your Port Director, George Hudson, typically handles longer-range issues and external coordination.

It is now 8:00 a.m. on Monday, August 10. Earlier this morning, George Hudson called you from home. He is on his way out of town due to a family emergency. He will be away from the port for the remainder of the week. He has asked you to act until he returns. He has forwarded his phone to you and arranged for you to have access to his e-mail messages. You have just reviewed his calendar and see that beginning at 8:30 a.m., you are scheduled to be in meetings for the remainder of the day. You have decided to spend the next half hour reviewing Port Director George Hudson's in-basket and e-mail, as well as your own.

About the Port of Dillon: The Port of Dillon serves a multi-state area on the northern border. Although the office is well inland, its jurisdiction covers about 450 miles of the border. Forty-one employees are assigned to work in the port. However, currently five positions are vacant. (See the accompanying organizational chart.)

The reporting chain-of-command is the following. George Hudson, the Dillon Port Director reports to Richard Carter, the Area Port Director. The four team supervisors, Sally Greer, Jessie White (you), Shankar Ganesh, and Elise Thornton, report directly to Port Director George Hudson. Martha Montgomery is the Port Director's secretary, and Gerald Hart is the Management Program Officer (MPO). MPO Hart handles a broad range of financial and administrative matters for the port.

Facilities. The Port of Dillon shares space in a large federal office building. Although the staff has grown considerably in the past year, your allotted office space has not increased. However, you have been told that the office will be moving to larger quarters within the same building once the space is vacated by another agency. Building management estimates that the move will take place in six months.

Operations. Many officers from the Port of Dillon have been involved in a department-wide anti-terrorism effort. Federal, state, and local authorities have been working together in a wide range of activities. Agency representatives will be meeting in the mayor's office to outline their longer-range activities. The Red Light Working Group, a broad, multi-agency initiative designed to intercept terrorists and terrorist's weapons from entering the country and setting up operations here, is scheduled to meet at City Hall from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, August 12, and from 8:30 a.m. until noon on Thursday, August 13. Port Director George Hudson has asked that you attend in his place and has briefed you extensively on the many facets of this new group.

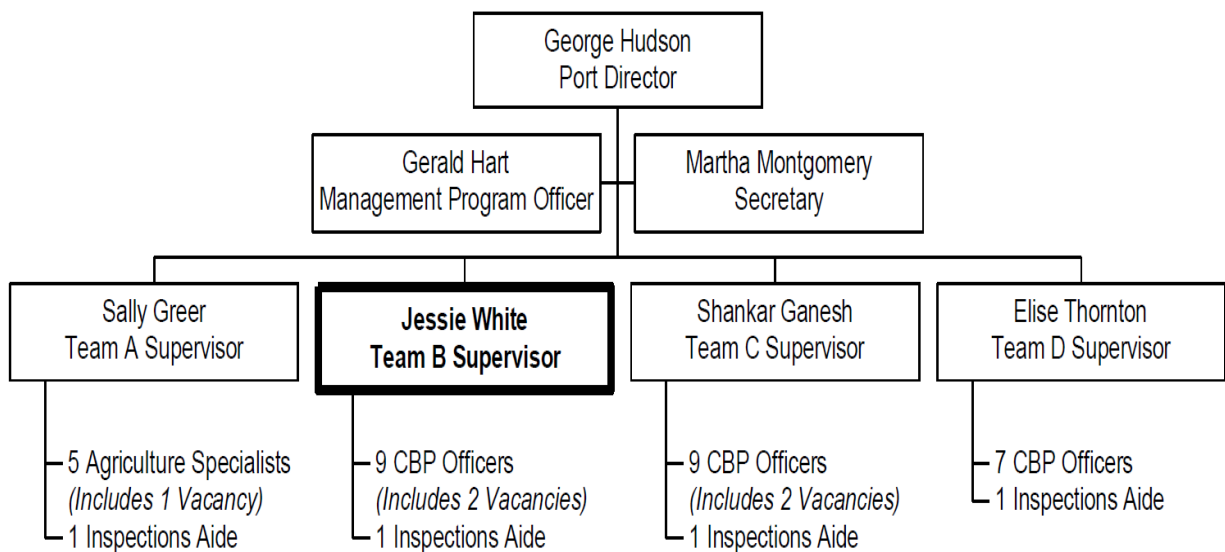
The objectives of the Red Light Working Group are being achieved through a series of activities. CBP Officers and Agriculture Specialists in the Port of Dillon have the lead in the first of these, a specialized training initiative known as AWARE, which is now underway. Team Supervisor Shankar Ganesh is responsible for planning and monitoring the day-to-day activities of AWARE. Overall, the initiative is going well due to Team Supervisor Ganesh's experience, organizational skills, and attention to detail.

Other Issues. Recently, there have been requests by local authorities to have the activities in the Port of Dillon become more visible to the public. Local authorities would like to inform the public regarding the role of CBP in lessening the threat of terrorism in our country and regarding what role CBP may have should Dillon suffer a terrorist attack.

Summary: You are Jessie White, a team supervisor at the Port of Dillon. Effective immediately, you will be acting for your Port Director, George Hudson, who has been called out of town due to a family emergency. It is now 8:00 a.m. on Monday, August 10. Starting at 8:30 a.m., you will be attending a series of meetings that are scheduled to last most of the day.

- The Port of Dillon is located near the northern border. The 41 employees of the port cover a 450-mile section of the border.
- The Port Director, George Hudson, reports to Richard Carter, the Area Port Director. Reporting to George Hudson are the Management Program Officer, Gerald Hart, Martha Montgomery, the office secretary, and the four team supervisors, Sally Greer, Jessie White (you), Shankar Ganesh, and Elise Thornton. (See the Organizational Chart.)
- Later this week, you will be attending a working group meeting to outline longer-range activities of the Red Light Working Group which is a broad, multi-agency initiative designed to intercept terrorists and terrorist's weapons from entering the country and setting up operations here. Your office is taking the lead in the first initiative, AWARE.

Port of Dillon Organizational Chart



July

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

August

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10 TODAY	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23 30	24 31	25	26	27	28	29

September

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

E-mail 1

Date: 8/10 7:50 AM

Sender: Martha Montgomery, Secretary

To: Jessie White, Team B Supervisor

Priority: Normal

Subject: Your Schedule for Today

Jessie,

I just talked to George. He called me from the airport and said that he was just about to board. He told me that he had reached you earlier and that you would be acting until he returns.

He asked me to make sure that his phone is forwarded to you. He also asked me to weed through his in-basket and collect the items that he was unable to handle last week. He said that he had already delegated his electronic mail box to you last week, so you should already have access to it. He asked that you cover the following meetings for him today:

- 8:30 – 9:30 a.m. – Teleconference with area port budget officer to discuss funding for next FY
- 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. – Meeting with Mayor and Public Relations Liaison to discuss community relations issues
- 1:00 p.m. – Meeting with state and local Homeland Security officials to discuss security for the upcoming Special Olympics Fundraising event
- 3:00 p.m. – Staff Meeting

George also wanted me to remind you that we are hosting the Red Light Working Group meeting on Wednesday and Thursday, and that you will need to clear your schedule so that you can attend in his place.

Shankar Ganesh will be off site conducting the training for AWARE. He can be reached on his cell phone. Sally Greer is scheduled for Specialized Computer Security Training this morning. She's here now, but she'll be away between 8:30 and 11:30. Elise Thornton is here.

I will be in all day. Let me know if you need anything.

Martha Montgomery
Secretary

E-mail 2

Date: 8/10 7:30 AM

Sender: Shankar Ganesh, Team C Supervisor

To: George Hudson, Port Director

Priority: Normal

Subject: AWARE Training – Dillon Suites Hotel

George,

I'm downtown at the Dillon Suites Hotel with several officers who have come in from out of town for the AWARE training. The reservations clerk says she has no record of our reservations. She has a few rooms left at double the per diem rate.

I checked with all of the hotels within a 20-mile radius. Same story. None of them seem to have any per diem-rate rooms either. There's some sort of national information technology group in town.

Could you give me the go-ahead to approve actual expenses? Give me a call on my cell phone when you get in. The number is 555-9623.

Thank you,

Shankar Ganesh

Team C Supervisor

E-mail 3

Date: 8/10 7:45 AM

Sender: Ellen Zerkowski, Public Affairs

To: George Hudson, Port Director

Priority: Normal

Subject: AWARE Training – Dillon Suites Hotel

Greetings,

I just got a call from Ted Bachman, a new reporter for the *Dillon Daily Telegraph*. He called to ask for information about two of your Team Supervisors, Jessie White and Shankar Ganesh. He wants to include this information in a story that he's writing about the efforts of the **Red Light Working Group**. He is going to send his draft to me at 10:00 a.m. for comment. I will send it to you. From what I could gather, the story he plans to publish is pretty general. I don't expect any major issues. It should be OK to print once we've gone through it. He asked for our response by 1:00 p.m. today.

However, my sensors went up when he started asking me questions about the AWARE project. He appears to know much more about AWARE than we have released to the public. When I asked how he had acquired so much information, he told me that, of course, he could not reveal his sources.

Give me a call when you get in.

Ellen Zerkowski
(999) 555-1324

E-mail 4

Date: 8/10 7:39 AM

Sender: Gerald Hart, MPO

To: George Hudson, Port Director

Priority: Normal

Subject: Surplus Communications Equipment

I just got a call from Army Captain Jack Pitts. The Army has some surplus communications equipment and other specialized equipment. Captain Pitts says that it is in relatively good shape. Maybe it might help given our current financial woes and need for equipment.

Captain Pitts said that he is going to dispose of the equipment either by declaring it surplus or by finding another agency that is willing to take the equipment. He said that he plans to call the DEA and the FBI. He knows that a few of the local police departments are also interested in the equipment. He is going to call everyone this afternoon if he does not hear from us.

If you want the equipment, we will need to cover the cost of shipping it. The equipment is at the Fort Evans Army Depot, about 100 miles west of here. Let me know what you want to do. If you want to talk to Captain Pitts yourself, his number is (999) 555-0920.

Gerald Hart
Management Program Officer
Port of Dillon

E-mail 5

Date: 8/10 7:14 AM

Sender: Elise Thornton, Team D Supervisor

To: George Hudson, Port Director

Priority: Normal

Subject: Officer Garcia's Two-Week Notice

Officer Juan Garcia gave me his two-week notice today. He has applied and been accepted for a job in the Port of Grover. His last day of work will be Friday, August 21. Officer Garcia has worked in several ports over his seven years of service and has worked in Dillon for the past 18 months. We are losing an invaluable resource. He is the fifth officer to leave within the past six months.

I spoke with Officer Garcia. He is leaving because of problems here in Dillon. He was frank and told me what he thinks the problems are, and I have heard similar complaints from other officers. He also said several other officers are seeking other jobs because there is no sign that things will improve. Officer Garcia gave three major reasons:

- **Inferior Equipment** – We seem to be the last to get the equipment we need to support our mission. Our computers are several generations behind. Other electronic equipment is aging and unreliable.
- **Poor Working Conditions** – Our space was meant to house twenty people, not forty-one. Things will only get worse if we are able to fill our vacancies.
- **Lack of Management Support** – Upper management in this agency does not seem to care about the needs of its officers. In addition, all officers are overloaded because our five vacant officer positions have still not been filled.

We should look at these issues carefully before we lose any more officers.

Elise

E-mail 6

Date: 8/10 7:10 AM

Sender: Charlie Hall, Dillon Chief of Police

To: George Hudson, Port Director

Priority: Urgent

Subject: Coordination of Joint Operation

George,

Within the past few weeks, we have begun to experience some coordination problems with your staff. While we were completing the final planning stages for this week's AWARE training, there were considerable disagreements over work methods and objectives. There also seems to be some confusion about resource levels.

The training is only the first in a series of activities planned in conjunction with the Red Light Working Group. This initiative is important and I want to give it every opportunity to succeed. However, I believe that we need to resolve some important issues, in private, before the Red Light Working Group meeting on Wednesday.

We do not need to involve the other members of the group, nor should we waste their time. Unfortunately, the only time I will be available before the meeting is between 8:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. today. After that, it will be difficult to reach me.

It is important that I speak with you.

Charlie Hall

Chief

Dillon Police Department

(999) 555-1897

E-mail 7

Date: 8/10 7:08 AM

Sender: Gerald Hart, MPO

To: George Hudson, Port Director

Priority: Normal

Subject: Visit from Richard Carter, Area Port Director

George,

Area Port Director, Richard Carter, wants to meet with us tomorrow, Tuesday, August 11. He is coming to Dillon to attend the Red Light Working Group meeting on Wednesday and Thursday. However, he's arriving a day early because he wants to speak with us about some concerns that he has about the Red Light Working Group prior to the meeting.

I mentioned our equipment and facilities problems here at the port to him. He said that there might be some money available for repairs and renovations. However, he would like to see conditions for himself before committing funds to upgrade our working environment.

I will bring him by as soon as he arrives, which will probably be about 11:00 a.m. We can discuss his concerns about the Red Light Working Group, grab some lunch, tour the office, and be through here in time for his next meeting at 2:00 p.m. His schedule is booked for the remainder of the afternoon.

Let me know as soon as possible if this does not work for you.

Gerald Hart

Management Program Officer

Port of Dillon

E-mail 8

Date: 8/7 7:08 PM

Sender: Terry Hanlon, Port of Windermere

To: George Hudson, Port Director

Priority: Normal

Subject: Windermere Training

Hi George:

This is Terry Hanlon over at the Port of Windermere. It's late Friday evening and I just wanted to touch base with you before I left the office. We are about to begin a training program that has many similarities to the AWARE training initiative. Our situation here in Windermere, as we begin to build our anti-terrorism taskforce, is in need of additional expertise.

I had the pleasure of working with Team Supervisor Shankar Ganesh on several occasions before I left the port there at Dillon three years ago to become the Port Director here in Windermere. Ganesh is well respected for his experience and skills. I would like to use him to train the folks who will be administering our training here at Windermere. We know that we would benefit greatly from his insight and experience. I would like to arrange to detail Ganesh to Windermere for the two-week period beginning August 24 and ending September 5. We will pay all related expenses.

I know this is short notice; however, we would appreciate your decision no later than COB on Monday, August 10. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Terry Hanlon

Port of Windermere

E-mail 9

Date: 8/10 7:00 AM

Sender: Sally Greer, Team A Supervisor

To: George Hudson, Port Director

Priority: Normal

Subject: New Job

George,

I am at the same time very excited and sad to be leaving Dillon for my new position as a Program Officer at Headquarters. As you know, I am expected to report for duty there on September 8. As we discussed, I will be taking one week of annual leave beginning on September 1.

I will miss everyone here at Dillon, but will especially miss the working relationship that we have developed over the past year. We have accomplished a lot together. Your support and guidance has enabled me to grow into my new duties. I wish you the best in your career and hope that our paths will cross in the not too distant future.

Sally

E-mail 10

Date: 8/7 8:15 AM

Sender: Fran Brown, Inspections Aide, Team D

To: George Hudson, Port Director

CC: Elise Thornton, Team D Supervisor

Priority: Normal

Subject: Lack of Cooperation

Director Hudson,

I would like to bring your attention to a matter that is undermining the effectiveness of this office. As the Inspections Aide on Team D, my responsibilities require a great deal of interaction with the officers. In recent weeks, several officers have refused to cooperate with me. Further, they have been rude and disrespectful when I have asked them for their assistance. I am concerned because I cannot accomplish my job without the full cooperation of the officers.

I have gone to Team D Supervisor Elise Thornton and tried to resolve the situation directly with her, but have been unable to do so. At present, I am preparing an additional memorandum to document all pertinent details.

Please let me know when we can meet to discuss this issue.

E-mail 11

Date: 8/10 7:15 AM

Sender: Gerald Hart, MPO

To: George Hudson, Port Director

Priority: Normal

Subject: No Air Conditioning Today

George,

A supervisor from building maintenance was here when I got in this morning to begin work on the ventilation system. He said that the window units are blocked by systems furniture and he could not work on them until we reconfigure the furniture. This has been a problem since we got the systems furniture three years ago, but they've ignored it until now. He pulled all of the fuses, so at this point we no longer have air conditioning and the temperature is expected to go up to 95 degrees today. Thinking ahead, unless this is fixed, we will not have heat either.

Twelve units are affected. I need to call the systems furniture people in to get a good estimate of what this will cost. Based on past experience, I estimate that reconfiguration will run at least \$1,000 per unit. I know that we are running low on funds. I have rechecked our budget, and we do not have the money to cover this expense. How would you like to proceed?

Gerald Hart
Management Program Officer

E-mail 12

Date: 8/7 10:45 AM

Sender: Sally Greer, Team A Supervisor

To: George Hudson, Port Director

Priority: Normal

Subject: Extended Medical Leave

George,

I thought I should alert you about some extended leave that I have just approved because it will, of course, put extra demands on my small staff. One of my Agriculture Specialists, Steven Owens, has asked for extended leave for foot surgery to correct damage to the nerves on both feet. His doctor feels that this surgery is necessary for him to be able to continue to perform his job duties.

He has tentatively scheduled surgery for August 26. The expected recovery period for this surgery is 4-6 weeks, during which he must stay off his feet as much as possible. He will require at least 3 weeks of bed rest. After that, he should be mobile. He will be requesting 3 weeks of sick leave beginning August 25. His leave balance is sufficient to cover this request.

He has provided me with a note from his physician and a completed form SF 71.

Thanks,
Sally

E-mail 13

Date: 8/03 6:39 AM

Sender: Marjorie Palmer, Training Officer

To: Jessie White, Team B Supervisor

Priority: Normal

Subject: Specialized Computer Security Training

This is to confirm your enrollment in Specialized Computer Security training. You have elected the following session:

Course Name: Specialized Computer Security Training

Date: Thursday, August 13

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Location: Area Port Office, Room 107

It is mandatory for all officers in the Dillon port to attend this Specialized Computer Security training. If you are unable to attend this session, please notify me immediately by phone or e-mail. We will be offering this training through the end of August on Mondays and on Thursdays at 9:00 a.m. All training must be completed by September 1.

Marjorie Palmer
Training Officer
Phone: 555-2590

E-mail 14

Date: 8/07 7:35 PM

Sender: Shankar Ganesh, Team C Supervisor

To: Jessie White, Team B Supervisor

Priority: Normal

Subject: AWARE Training

Jessie-

I'm downtown at the Dillon Suites Hotel checking out the facilities for the training for AWARE. I was looking at the agenda for the training and wanted to remind you —while I was thinking about it—that I have you on the agenda Monday from 10:00 until we break for lunch around noon.

Your input will fit appropriately into the agenda at that point. Lucky that you and Elise had that training at FLETC last month. The timing couldn't have been better for this program. Give me a call on my cell phone when you can. There are a few things I'd like to go over with you. The number is 555-9623.

Shankar Ganesh
Team C Supervisor

In-Basket Multiple-Choice Questions

Directions: The questions in this exercise measure your ability to make decisions, solve problems, plan, manage information, and use your time and resources effectively. The questions ask you to respond to the problems and issues presented by the in-basket materials in the first part of this exercise.

Each question presents several alternative actions. Your task is to review these alternatives and to select the one answer that is closest to the action that you would take acting for the Port Director at Dillon. There are 16 questions in the practice exercise.

It is to your advantage to answer every question. Your score on the actual assessment will be based on the number of questions you answer correctly. Therefore, when you complete this practice exercise, and when you take the assessment, answer every question, even if you are not sure of the correct answer.

1. E-mail 3 is a message from Ellen Zerkowski from the Public Affairs Office. What is the **MOST** critical issue raised in this e-mail?
 - A) Reporter Ted Bachman's preparation of a story on the Red Light Working Group.
 - B) The nature of the information reporter Ted Bachman has requested.
 - C) Ellen Zerkowski's request for comments on reporter Ted Bachman's article.
 - D) The questions that reporter Ted Bachman asked about project AWARE.
 - E) Reporter Ted Bachman's refusal to divulge his source of knowledge about project AWARE.
2. In e-mail 4, MPO Gerald Hart informs you that U.S. Army Captain Jack Pitts has surplus equipment available. Which course of action would you be **MOST** likely to take as your first response to Captain Pitts' offer?
 - A) Contact Captain Pitts and ask him to send the equipment to you.
 - B) Meet with the other Team Supervisors and ask them whether the equipment would be useful for the port.
 - C) Arrange to get more information about the type of equipment and its condition from Captain Pitts.
 - D) Ask the members of the Red Light Working Group during the upcoming meeting whether the equipment would be useful to this joint effort.
 - E) Contact Captain Pitts and tell him that you will not need the equipment.
3. In e-mail 5, Team Supervisor Elise Thornton raises a number of issues that are affecting the morale of officers in the port. Suppose that in response to this memorandum, you decide to develop a proposal for improving morale to present to Port Director George Hudson upon his return. Which of the following activities would you perform **FIRST**?
 - A) Investigate options for improving the quality and quantity of equipment available to officers in the port.
 - B) Conduct a meeting of all personnel in the office to discuss issues that are affecting morale.
 - C) Discuss this with the Area Port Director during his visit.
 - D) Meet with the Team Supervisors to examine and prioritize issues that are affecting the morale of personnel.
 - E) Prepare your proposal based the information raised in Team Supervisor Elise Thornton's memorandum and a follow-up discussion with her about these issues.

4. In his e-mail message to Port Director George Hudson (e-mail 6), Dillon Chief of Police Charlie Hall expressed concern about the coordination of joint operations. Which course of action would you be **MOST** likely to take in response to this message?
- A) Send Chief Hall an e-mail message explaining that you are acting for the Port Director and are unavailable to speak with him today. Ask him if there is any other time to discuss the matter before the meeting.
 - B) Send Chief Hall an e-mail message explaining that you are acting for the Port Director and that this issue can be handled when he returns.
 - C) Send Chief Hall an e-mail message explaining that you are acting for the Port Director, but are confident that these issues can be resolved during the working group meeting.
 - D) Telephone Chief Hall at your earliest possible convenience before 11:00 a.m. today to discuss the issues or to select another meeting time.
 - E) Leave Chief Hall a voice mail message later today and reassure him that the coordination issues will work themselves out.

5. In e-mail 7, MPO Gerald Hart states that the Area Port Director, Richard Carter, wants to visit the port on Tuesday. Which action would you be **MOST** likely to take in response to this e-mail message?
- A) Meet with Area Port Director Richard Carter and personally accompany him during the visit; reschedule any pre-existing appointments.
 - B) Meet with Area Port Director Richard Carter and personally accompany him during the visit; ask Team Supervisor Elise Thornton to handle any pre-existing appointments.
 - C) Handle any pre-existing appointments yourself; ask MPO Gerald Hart to reschedule Area Port Director Richard Carter's visit for later in the day.
 - D) Handle any pre-existing appointments yourself; ask Team Supervisor Elise Thornton to meet with Area Port Director Richard Carter and accompany him during the visit.
 - E) Explain to Area Port Director Richard Carter that you have a preexisting appointment and ask him for his recommendation on handling the visit.

Assume that arrangements are made for the Area Port Director, Richard Carter, to visit the Port of Dillon. You decide to list a number of issues to be discussed with Richard Carter.

6. Which of the following issues would be **MOST** appropriate to raise during this meeting?
7. Which of the following issues would be **LEAST** appropriate to raise during this meeting?
- A) Status of AWARE (Introduction)
 - B) Request for additional funds for AWARE (e-mail 2)
 - C) Availability of surplus equipment (e-mail 4)
 - D) Morale issues in the port (e-mail 5)
 - E) Coordination concerns within the Red Light Working Group (e-mail 6)
8. In e-mail 8, Port Director Terry Hanlon asks whether Team Supervisor Shankar Ganesh can be detailed to the Port of Windermere. Which of the factors listed below would carry the **MOST** weight in this decision?
- A) Team Supervisor Shankar Ganesh's performance at the Port of Dillon
 - B) The impact of this detail on the workload and staffing at the port
 - C) Team Supervisor Shankar Ganesh's qualifications for the detail
 - D) The dollar cost of this detail to the port
 - E) The impact of this detail on Team Supervisor Shankar Ganesh's career goals

9. E-mail 10 is a message from Fran Brown regarding tensions with Team Supervisor Elise Thornton's group. Suppose you meet with Fran Brown next week to discuss her concerns. Which of the following would provide the **STRONGEST** indication of the initial effectiveness of the meeting?
- A) Decrease in complaints from Fran Brown
 - B) Increase in complaints from Fran Brown
 - C) Increase in the number of requests from Fran Brown for assistance with Elise Thornton's group
 - D) Decrease in the number of requests from Fran Brown for assistance with Elise Thornton's group
 - E) Increase in the number of meetings between Fran Brown and Elise Thornton
10. In e-mail 11, MPO Gerald Hart describes the problem with the ventilation and air conditioning system. You would be **LEAST** likely to handle this message by:
- A) sending an urgent e-mail message to the area port office requesting funding to resolve the problem.
 - B) asking MPO Gerald Hart to formulate a funding request to transmit through proper channels.
 - C) calling building management to ask them to replace the fuses immediately.
 - D) asking MPO Gerald Hart to get you more information about the problem and alternatives for its resolution.
 - E) asking Secretary Martha Montgomery to call an outside contractor to service the units immediately.
11. E-mail 13 notifies you of a previously scheduled training course. How would you handle this engagement?
- A) Attend the training as scheduled.
 - B) Send Team Supervisor Shankar Ganesh in your place.
 - C) Send MPO Gerald Hart in your place.
 - D) Reschedule the training.
 - E) Cancel the training without rescheduling.
12. Which of these issues would be **MOST** critical for you to handle **personally** this morning?
13. Which of these issues would be **LEAST** critical for you to handle **personally** this morning?
- A) Responding to Team Supervisor Shankar Ganesh's request about funding to cover lodging for officers involved in AWARE (e-mail 2).
 - B) Responding to the request to discuss coordination between the Port of Dillon and the Dillon Police Department on joint operations (e-mail 6).
 - C) Deciding what to do about the Army's surplus equipment (e-mail 4).
 - D) Responding to Port Director Terry Hanlon's request to detail Team Supervisor Shankar Ganesh to the Port of Windermere (e-mail 8).
 - E) Addressing the claims made by Fran Brown (e-mail 10).

14. Which of the following e-mails would you be **LEAST** likely to retain after you have dealt with the immediate situation or problem it raises?
- A) e-mail 5: Team Supervisor Elise Thornton's e-mail
 - B) e-mail 6: Police Chief Charlie Hall's e-mail message
 - C) e-mail 8: Port Director Terry Hanlon's e-mail
 - D) e-mail 10: Inspections Aide Fran Brown's e-mail complaint
 - E) e-mail 13: Training Officer Marjorie Palmer's e-mail message
15. Which of the following activities would be **LEAST** appropriate to delegate to Secretary Martha Montgomery?
- A) Contacting Port Director Terry Hanlon about Team Supervisor Shankar Ganesh's detail (e-mail 8).
 - B) Initiating paperwork for filling Team Supervisor Sally Greer's position (e-mail 9).
 - C) Asking MPO Gerald Hart to get more information about the Army's surplus equipment (e-mail 4).
 - D) Meeting with Fran Brown to discuss her complaint (e-mail 10).
 - E) Responding to Marjorie Palmer's e-mail message (e-mail 13).
16. Suppose that you ask Team Supervisor Elise Thornton to help you handle some of the critical issues currently facing the port. You have decided to take five minutes to update her before your meetings begin today. Which of the following issues would be **LEAST** critical to discuss?
- A) Public Affairs Officer Ellen Zerkowski's e-mail message (e-mail 3).
 - B) The visit of Area Port Director Richard Carter (e-mail 7).
 - C) Team Supervisor Shankar Ganesh's possible detail to the Port of Windermere (e-mail 8).
 - D) Team Supervisor Shankar Ganesh's request for approval to use actual expenses at the hotel (e-mail 2).
 - E) The problem with the ventilation and air conditioning system (e-mail 11).

Answers to the Practice Questions

1. Correct Answer: D

The most critical piece of information is that reporter Ted Bachman's knowledge of the AWARE project is more extensive than what has been released to the public, suggesting that there has been leak. Ted Bachman's story about the Red Light Working Group (**A**) is less important; he is giving CBP the opportunity to review the story before it is printed. His request for information (**B**) is not problematic because he has not requested sensitive information. His request for comments from the CBP (**C**) is also reasonable; you or one of the more senior people on the staff should be able to complete the review and comments within the proposed time frame. Ted Bachman's refusal to divulge his source (**E**) is also less critical than the implication that he knows a great deal about AWARE.

2. Correct Answer: C

The first thing you should do is get more information about the equipment that U.S. Army Captain Pitts is offering. Getting information about this equipment is essential to making a decision about its value to the office. It will cost money to ship the equipment to the office, and if obtained, the equipment would have to be stored and maintained.

It would be unproductive to call a meeting with the other Team Supervisors (**B**) until you have more information about the equipment. Without this information, they would be unable to evaluate its worth.

Once you have information about the equipment and its potential use to the office or the working group, you can make an informed decision. (See options **A** and **E**.) However, either option is inappropriate as a first step. You don't want useless equipment taking up the port's limited storage space. However, it is also premature to reject potentially useful equipment.

By delaying your response to Captain Pitts until the working group convenes (**D**), you would most probably lose your opportunity to acquire the equipment. By then, Captain Pitts will have offered the equipment to other agencies.

3. Correct Answer: D

It would be best to meet with the other Team Supervisors as your first step. You have input from Team Supervisor Elise Thornton on issues affecting the morale of the officers, so further discussion with her (**E**) would not add to your knowledge and the other supervisors should have the opportunity to add their perspectives. Although it is important to get input from the personnel assigned to the Port of Dillon (**B**), it is advisable to talk to the Team Supervisors first. As part of your information gathering, you would also want to investigate concerns about equipment at the port (**A**) but this is not as important as the information you could gather from the other team supervisors. It would not be appropriate to discuss this with Area Port Director Richard Carter before bringing it up with your Port Director (**C**).

4. Correct Answer: D; partial credit, A

Asking Chief Hall to provide an alternate time for a conversation (**A**) is also reasonable. Chief Hall has placed a demand on Port Director George Hudson's time (yours, really since you are acting for him) without considering his time constraints. However, option **A** presents a riskier strategy, since you have no assurance that there is another time that will fit both your schedules.

Loss of Chief Charlie Hall's support could jeopardize an ongoing operation. Therefore, you do not want to ignore him (**E**), nor do you want to wait until after the working group to have his issues addressed (**B**). You also do not want these issues addressed publicly during the meeting (**C**).

5. Correct Answer: B; partial credit, D

You will be attending the Red Light Working Group meeting, and you are in the best position to discuss broader issues with the Area Port Director, Richard Carter. Accompanying him while he visits the Port of Dillon will give you further opportunities to discuss his concerns. Team Supervisor Elise Thornton also has had the FLETC training that Team Supervisor Shankar Ganesh refers to in Document 14 and can step in for you at the AWARE training.

Option **D** is also viable, but is not as good as option **B**. Although Team Supervisor Elise Thornton is familiar with many of the issues affecting the Port of Dillon, she has not been as involved with the working group and would have to come up to speed by Tuesday.

Option **A** is not a workable solution. Rescheduling your appearance at the AWARE training would not be appropriate as Team Supervisor Shankar Ganesh makes a point of saying that your presentation is placed appropriately in the program.

Option **C** is not a satisfactory solution. Area Port Director Richard Carter, has other meetings scheduled after 2:00 p.m. Option **E** is not a good choice; this problem should be solved without consulting Richard Carter.

6. Correct Answer: A

Of the options listed, it would be **most** appropriate for you to discuss the status of AWARE (**A**). It is part of the Red Light effort and Area Port Director, Richard Carter, is concerned with how it is going. It would not be inappropriate to discuss the Army's surplus equipment (**C**) with the Area Port Director. However, the value of such discussion will depend on information you receive about the actual nature of the equipment.

Less appropriate is Team Supervisor Shankar Ganesh's request to approve additional funds for AWARE (**B**). This issue needs to be addressed immediately and you have the authority and means to resolve this issue it by the time Area Port Director Richard Carter arrives the next day. ‘

Similarly, the value of discussing Police Chief Hall's concerns (**E**) is questionable. It would be best to use discretion and resolve any issues with Chief Hall before alerting officials up the chain of command.

7. Correct Answer: D

It would be **least** appropriate to discuss internal morale issues (**D**). Such matters are best resolved internally.

8. Correct Answer: B

Given the information presented in the in-basket, the most important consideration is how Team Supervisor Shankar Ganesh's absence affects the port's workload (**B**). The port is losing one supervisor who will be taking another job and there are several vacancies.

As long as Team Supervisor Shankar Ganesh's job performance (**A**) is at least satisfactory (and there is no evidence to the contrary), job performance would not be your most important consideration. Team Supervisor Shankar Ganesh's qualifications for the detail (**C**) may be the Port of Windermere's primary concern; you should be most concerned about the impact on the port.

Because the Port of Windemere has offered to cover expenses, the cost of the detail (**D**) is less important than its impact on the port's workload. Although important, Team Supervisor Shankar Ganesh's career goals (**E**) should not carry the most weight in the decision.

9. Correct Answer: E

Option (**E**), an increase in the number of meetings between Fran Brown and Elise Thornton indicates an improvement in communication.

Options **A** and **B** do not indicate an improvement because the number of complaints do not reflect a change in the relationship. Options **C** and **D** are not indications of cooperation.

10. Correct Answer: E

Option **E**, asking Secretary Martha Montgomery to call an outside contractor is **least** advisable. The units only need the fuses replaced and building maintenance removed the fuses. The issue should be handled with building maintenance.

Options **A**, **B**, **C**, and **D** are all steps that might be followed in solving the short- and long-range problems. Calling building management (**C**) is an appropriate first response to this message. The expected maximum temperature today would make working in the office untenable. Alerting the area port office with an urgent e-mail message would be another step you might take today (**A**). In the longer range, you would ask MPO Gerald Hart get more information about the problem and alternatives for its resolution (**D**) and to prepare a funding request (**B**).

11. Correct Answer: D

Your best option is to reschedule (**D**) the training course. This is a mandatory training course, but you now have a conflict that prevents you from attending at the scheduled time (**A**).

Because the training is mandatory, you cannot send another person in your place (**B** or **C**), nor should you cancel without rescheduling (**E**).

12. Correct Answer: B

It would be most critical to try to touch base with Chief of Police Charlie Hall personally (**B**) since he will be difficult to reach after 11:00 a.m. this morning. He is raising serious concerns and you have time to call him this morning before or between your meetings.

Although important, authorizing expenses for the funding issue (A) is less critical. You can delegate this since it can be handled with a quick phone call.

Although a response is needed by this afternoon, someone else could handle the issue of the Army's surplus equipment (C).

Responding to Windemere Port Director Terry Hanlon can wait until you have more time to consider the consequences to the staffing situation in Dillon (D).

It would be reasonable to initiate action of some kind in response to Inspections Aide Fran Brown's claims (E) this morning, but it is not critical.

13. Correct Answer: D

It is **least** critical to provide a response to Port Director Terry Hanlon this morning. Of all the issues compared to the other issues (A, B, C, and E) Port Director Terry Hanlon's request has the least direct effect on your operations. Although Port Director Terry Hanlon has requested a response today (D) she does not need it this morning; nor does she need to hear from you personally. This may even be a matter that Port Director George Hudson should decide when he returns. A phone call from Secretary Martha Montgomery, the secretary, explaining that The Port Director is on emergency leave might be all that is needed today.

14. Correct Answer: E

Once you have rescheduled the training, there is no reason to retain Training Officer Marjorie Palmer's e-mail message (E). You should keep a record of your contact with Chief of Police Charlie Hall (B). The other documents (A, C, and D) are useful as documentation of the issues they present.

15. Correct Answer: D

It would be least appropriate for Secretary Martha Montgomery to meet with Inspections Aide Fran Brown. However with sufficient guidance, Secretary Martha Montgomery could contact Port Director Terry Hanlon about Team Supervisor Shankar Ganesh's detail (A), prepare paperwork for filling the upcoming vacancy (B), ask MPO Gerald Hart to ask get more information about the Army's surplus equipment (C), or reschedule your training (E).

16. Correct Answer: C

In your discussion with supervisor Team Supervisor Elise Thornton, it is least critical for you to discuss Port Director Terry Hanlon's request to detail Team Supervisor Shankar Ganesh to the Port of Windermere (C).

It would be reasonable to alert her to the conversation between Public Affairs Officer Ellen Zerkowski and the reporter, Ted Bachman (A). Because of the sensitivity of a potential information leak, this conversation is best had in person. If there is time, you should alert Team Supervisor Elise Thornton that Area Port Director, Richard Carter, will be visiting the office tomorrow (B). Team Supervisor Shankar Ganesh's request for approval to use actual expenses at the hotel needs to be settled today (D), Team Supervisor Elise Thornton will need to know about this if she will be filling in for you. It would be important to discuss the lack of air-conditioning (E) because it could potentially shut down the port office. You would want Team Supervisor Elise Thornton to follow up on this in your absence.

Study Resources

RECOMMENDED READINGS

Bazerman, M. H., & Moore, D. A. (2012). **Judgment in Managerial Decision Making**. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons. ISBN# 0470049456.

Covey, S. R. (2004). **Seven Habits of Highly Effective People**. New York, NY: Free Press. ISBN# 0743269519.

Douglass, M. E., & Douglass, D. N. (1993). **Manage Your Time, Your Work, Yourself**. New York, NY: AMACOM. ISBN# 0814478255.

Gleeson, K. (2008). **The Personal Efficiency Program: How to Stop Feeling Overwhelmed and Win Back Control of Your Work**. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley & Sons. ISBN# 0470371315.

Hammond, J. S., Keeney, R. L., & Raiffa, H. (2015). **Smart Choices: A Practical Guide to Making Better Decisions**. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press. ISBN# 1633691047.

Harvard Business Review. (2011). **Harvard Business Review on Making Smart Decisions**. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press. ISBN# 1422172392.

Heerkens, G. R. (2005). **The Business-Savvy Project Manager: Indispensable Knowledge and Skills for Success**. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Education. ISBN# 007144307X.

Hemphill, B. (2005). **Taming the Paper Tiger at Work (3rd ed.)**. Washington, DC: Kaplan Business. ISBN# 0938721984.

Jones, M. D. (1998). **The Thinker's Toolkit: 14 Powerful Techniques for Problem Solving (Rev. ed.)**. New York, NY: Crown Business. ISBN# 0812928083.

MacKenzie, A., & Nickerson, P. (2009). **The Time Trap: The Classic Book on Time Management**. New York, NY: AMACOM. ISBN# 0814413382.

Maxwell, J. C. (2005). **Thinking for a Change: 11 Ways Highly Successful People Approach Life and Work**. Nashville, TN: Center Street. ISBN# 0446692883.

INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES/COURSEWARE

There are multiple, free online course available. These courses can provide you with basic strategies to improve your writing skills. Many of the courses contain homework assignments for independent completion.

Beutell, N. **Principles of Management**. Iona College. iTunes Podcast.
<http://www2.iona.edu/faculty/nbeutell/Lectures/>

Jackson, J., Lucash, P., Soden, D., & Salzer, M. **BUS208: Principles of Management**. Course.
<https://learn.saylor.org/course/bus208>

Stone, R. **Effective Problem-Solving and Decision-Making.** University of California, Irvine.
<https://www.coursera.org/learn/problem-solving>.

PRACTICE TESTS

There are many practice tests available for free or a small fee. These tests do not include job-related scenarios, or mirror exactly the question types and format of the CBP In-Basket. Nonetheless, you can obtain valuable experience completing a computerized In-Basket. In addition, many of the assessments are timed, providing practice performing within time constraints.

You can locate additional interactive practice tests by performing a keyword search on the internet. Suggested keywords include combinations of any/all of the following words: practice, test, in-box, in-basket, and free.

Assessment Day Practice Aptitude Tests. **E-Tray Exercises.** Interactive website with a variety of free tests. <https://www.assessmentday.co.uk/e-tray-exercise.htm>.

Cubiksonline. **Civil Service Fast Stream.** Interactive website with practice test.
<http://www.cubiksonline.com/cubiks/practicetests/>

Job Test Prep. **Free In-tray Exercise Example.** Interactive website with practice test.
<https://www.jobtestprep.co.uk/free-in-tray-exercise>.

Note: Website addresses can change rapidly. If you cannot locate the link listed, please search by copying and pasting the entire reference into your browser. Report broken links or provide feedback on this guide via email to PROMSUPPORT@cbp.dhs.gov.